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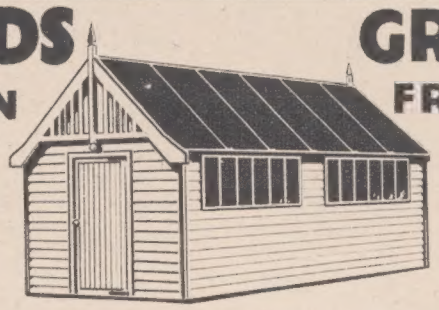

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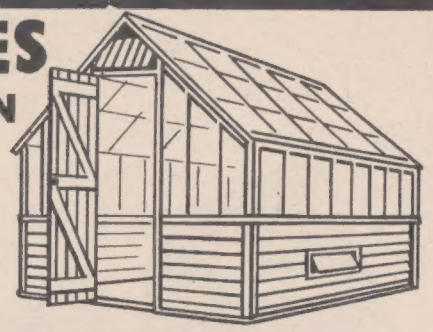

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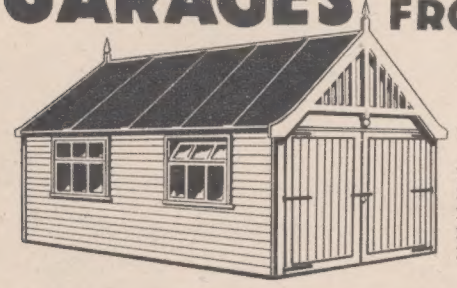

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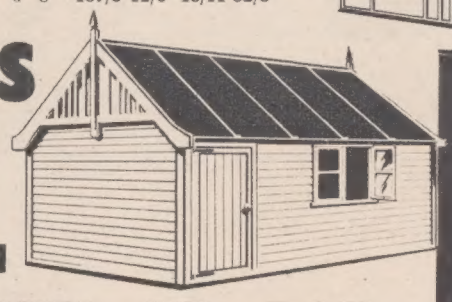

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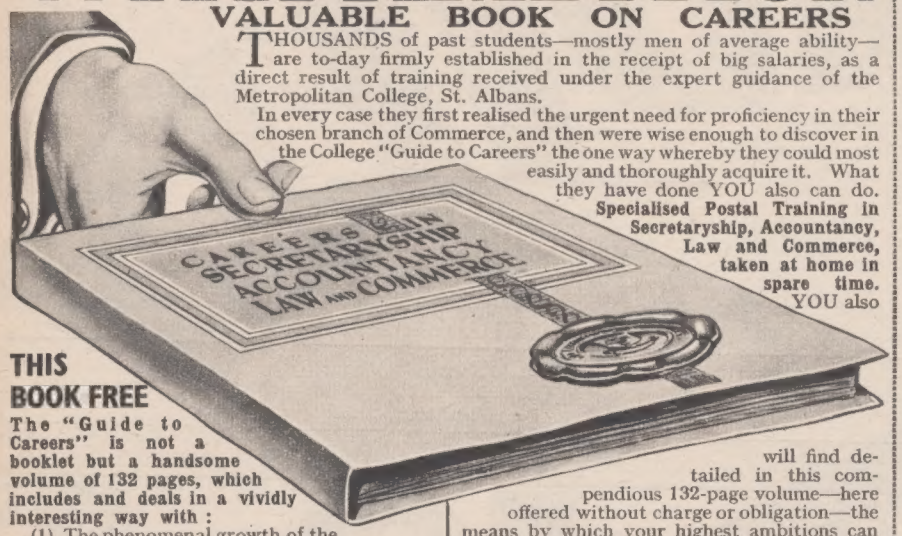

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WEDDING GOWN MURDER

In the frothy folds of a discarded wedding dress, Susan Dare, meek little crime reporter, finds a clue to the shadow of tragedy haunting the dark, foreboding panelled rooms of Judge Brigle's house

BY MIGNON G. EBERHART

ILLUSTRATED BY T. GRAINGER JEFFREY

And she knew who had murdered Cynthia Cavendish

OLD Judge Brigle died in November in the great black bed on the second floor of his south Chicago house. It was the house to which he'd brought his bride, Celia Brigle in her laces and her fragile beauty; the house in which his children, Celia and Cynthia and, finally, Royal, were born. The house where Celia, so like her mother in looks, had died; had died actually of typhoid when there was scarcely another case in the growing city. The drains were repaired shortly after but it always seemed to Celia Brigle that there remained somewhere inside the heavy, fumed oak panels and creeping stubbornly about the great rooms and the long halls, a faint, sweetish, slightly sickening smell.

It was the house from which Cynthia, beautiful too, but stronger and more selfish, had married and gone. Married Cary Cavendish; and a very fine marriage it was, too, with money to burn, only they didn't burn it, for they thought far too well of it. It was the house in which Royal Brigle, a dark child, sallow and thin, with silent eyes, lived through a precarious childhood on to a scarcely more robust, and certainly no less silent youth. He was a few months old when his mother died and Cousin Eliza Powner came to nurse Celia Brigle, to take care of Royal, to launch and marry off Cynthia, and to keep house for the judge, and he was exactly twenty-one when Judge Brigle died.

That was in November. And all Chicago knew—or could have known—that much of the Brigles.

And in March Susan Dare sat on a huge chair, vaguely Renaissance with a carved lion's head boring between her shoulder blades, dangled her feet helplessly at least ten inches above the floor, and wondered why Cynthia Cavendish had been murdered. And who had murdered her.

It was extremely quiet. Probably a habit of the house. Thick stone walls, rearing upward for three full stories above deep old cellars, were built to shut out sound and succeeded. Wood panels were everywhere and a particularly massive and ugly stairway went straight upward from beside Susan. Wide doors opposite led into a drawing-room; it was a dark twilight and there were no lights in the room, but the things Susan could see—an enormous mahogany table, dark chairs, a marble figure on a gilt base—suggested appalling vistas beyond her range of vision.

The hall, indeed, was sufficiently discouraging; a lovely grandfather clock, facing her from beside the great front door—the clock was enormous and beautiful but not running; a small French armchair with needle-point on a delicate pink background; a long settle of fumed oak with brown leather cushions; a low table of carved teakwood with mother-of-pearl inlay; under all were rugs and long oriental runners; so many that they over-lapped each other. The whole was extraordinarily depressing—the mixture rather than the separate ingredients. It was also cold in the room and the air was musty and stale with the sweetish smell, which had haunted Celia Brigle, uppermost.

A good place, thought Susan, morbidly, to do a murder, if it had to be done.

She listened for the sound of the voices that must be going on from behind those great closed doors in the library at the back of the house. There was nothing to be heard. Even the clock's refusing to tick seemed deliberate. Outside it was raining and there were cars parked in the rain. Off to the east were the cold grey waters of the lake. Nearer was the Midway, beautiful, cloisterlike, grey now from the rain.

All about that particular section of the city were magnificent old houses, enormously big, built for permanence and built for the most part during an earlier day—before the tide of building had swept north. Now they made of themselves a kind of closed community, their silence and their dignity, no less than their forbidding, spiked iron fences. making an invincible barrier against encroachment, There were great slate roofs over rambling attics which themselves were large enough to house a family. Brownstone and gables and stairways. Oriental rugs and bronze figures and gilt-framed pictures. Chinese lamps and Japanese screens. French armchairs.

Upstairs, a great black bed which Susan hadn't seen, but was to see. All very elegant—all very grand.

Susan herself was very elegant, if slightly hussy, in black and silver fox and exotic yellow orchids. This unfortunate effect was due, as with the furnishings of the hall, not to the objects themselves but to their combination on Susan.

"There's no use denying it," Jim had said

(*please turn over*)

disapprovingly. "It's something about your eyes when you wear orchids. A kind of glitter."

"I'm a woman of the world," said Susan, complacently surveying the silver fox. "It was a very nice party that I left to dine with you. It began with cocktails at five and is still going on."

"Huh," said Jim, unappreciatively. He added: "I was going to take you to a movie. I suppose you'd rather go to a night club. You and your orchids."

Susan, who had presented the orchids to herself, saw no need to say so and agreed sweetly to the night club.

But they hadn't gone. For Jim stopped to telephone the office. And Cynthia Cavendish had been murdered. Stabbed to death in the ponderous, dark Brigle house. And now Susan sat in the Renaissance chair and listened. And once, fleetingly, wished she hadn't worn silver fox and orchids; they looked terribly gay and worldly in that place of gloom and desolation and violent death.

Away up the stairs a policeman appeared, the blue bulk emerging reluctantly from the gloom. He stopped, peered at her, seemed to know why she was there and retreated. Somewhere up there he touched a button and there was a path of yellowish light coming down the stairway.

Susan wriggled until the lion gnawed at one shoulder. The body was, of course, still in the house. And she knew the bare outline of the story. Jim had got it from the city editor and had told her.

It had happened, as near as they could discover, around five o'clock. And it had happened on the very eve of the Brigle's disposing of the whole property by private sale.

"House, car, furnishings—everything. It's been advertised for several days in the papers. Sale to start to-morrow. Some people had been in the house getting things ready; a Mr. Sweetum, who is to take charge of the sale and a girl who's been assisting him—getting things marked and so forth. This afternoon Mrs. Cavendish came to the house again to make some final disposition about things. And was found stabbed. That's all anybody knows."

"Who else was in the house?"

"Don't know," said Jim, and put his foot harder on the accelerator.

Now, back there in the library they were talking endlessly. Where was Jim? Probably back there, too. Or would they let a reporter in to that conference? Jim somehow did manage to get to places where there was news. And this was not the first time he had got Susan there, too. But just now she was rapidly taking pneumonia. Also her feet were going to sleep and felt like cold sponges. She rose. Her feet made strange movements on the rugs. The policeman above her was aware of the motion and came to look down at her again.

After a moment during which they stared at each other through the path of yellow light and the wreaths of dusk beyond it, he began to descend.

"You Miss Dare?" he said, reaching the floor level. His big voice was lowered but still sounded loud and strange in the sombre hall. "He told me to look out for you." He didn't say who, but continued: "You look sort of cold."

"I am," said Susan, with emphasis.

"Well—there's a fire back here. Maybe you'd better come back."

He led the way and Susan followed. Through a dusky dining-room with a bare, polished table and sideboard and high-backed chairs looming emptily out of the shadows. At the end of it were three doors.

"That one," said the policeman, "goes to the butler's pantry. This one to an elevator. They lived in style in them days. There's a regular bar set up in the butler's pantry. And the elevator's got a red satin bench. Ain't working now, though. The middle door's the one." He opened it. They entered a little hall and then a small room, furnished in wicker and cushions and looking shabby, as if it had been much used. On a table someone had left a white bowl containing an ornamental sword plant made of bright metal, and its gleaming points struck a sharply modern and strident note. There was a fireplace and a gas log burning, and it was warm.

Then Susan noted the door on the opposite side of the room. It was open and there were dark rows of shelves to be seen and she heard now someone speaking in the room beyond.

". . . tell me, Mr. Sweetum, exactly who came into the house this afternoon?"

"Exactly what relation were you to Judge Brigle Mrs. Powner?"

"But——" said Susan, looking at the policeman. He was listening, too.

"Oh, it's all right," he said. "Don't worry. It's Lieutenant Mohrn in there. I guess—" he paused, looking at her with knowledge and a kind of speculation—"I guess you know him, Miss Dare."

She did, of course. And admired him and with reason. She remembered, suddenly, a certain monkey who stuffed himself with sweets. A house on a ravine and an Easter devil.

"But I can hear every word they say," she said, yielding again to the presence of conscience.

"There's a lot of people in there," said the policeman, easily. "You won't hear anything that's a secret. You better sit close to the fire, Miss Dare." He saw that she was comfortable and went to the door and paused again. "If you want to look at the house it's all right. I'll be right upstairs. It's a queer old place. The body's still up there. On a big black bed in what they say was the old judge's room. A grand old judge, he was. I've seen him pronounce many a sentence. Hard. But just."

"Haven't they any idea who killed her?"

"Well, there's only five people that could. The house was locked up, and this fellow that's managing the sale was here. And the girl that's working for him. Then there was this boy, young Brigle. Brother to Mrs. Cavendish. And an aunt or cousin or somebody that seems to sort of rule the roost. And"—the policeman's voice became cryptic—"and Cary Cavendish."

"Cary Cavendish!"

"Yeah. The murdered woman's husband. And nobody else was in the house. Nobody, that is," added the policeman, "that they know about. There could be a couple of regiments tucked away in the place and nobody the wiser. I'd better get back upstairs."

There was in his hasty departure a suggestion that the body might have been spirited away during his absence. By one of the regiments, perhaps, thought Susan, as she opened her coat, and decided to accept the officer's assurance that it was all right to listen. It was that or pneumonia, she told herself and was convinced without much difficulty.

". . . I came about nine o'clock this morning and Miss Michelle got here about an hour later. She was late. But things were practically ready for the sale so it didn't matter. There was still some glassware to arrange and a little French cabinet full of Dresden figures. I wanted to get the clock going again; it'll strike but won't run. Then there was a little polishing to give some of the better pieces of furniture." It was evidently the voice of the man in charge of the sale. Sweetum, was it? He continued: "We worked around till about four."

"Did you go out to lunch?"

"No. We had some sandwiches and coffee in the kitchen."

"Then what happened?"

"Well—young Mr. Brigle and Mrs. Powner came. And about an hour later Mrs. Cavendish——"

"Wait, please. What time did you arrive, Mr. Brigle?"

A young voice replied; young but reluctant and not too steady. "About four, I think."

"Why did you come?"

"There were some things I wanted to get."

"What?"

There was a slight hesitation.

"Oh, just some things I had had as a child. Sentimental associations. Things I didn't want sold. Some things that had belonged to my mother which Cousin—Mrs. Powner—wished to keep. A few books. Tennis rackets. Father's collection of butterflies. Things like that. Nothing of any commercial—" he stopped and continued: "I mean to say of intrinsic value. They are on the table there . . . As you see, there is nothing of importance."

"I see. How does it happen you had not removed them before now?"

"Why, I—I don't know. It just happened."

"You and Mrs. Powner have been living with your sister, have you not?"

"Yes. Since January. That's when we decided to give up the house."

"Any particular reason for that?"

"For giving up the house, you mean? It's fairly obvious, I think. No use keeping up this place for two people. It needs an army of servants."

"I see. By the way—don't mind these questions, Mr. Brigle, they've got to be asked. This one always arises. Was there any pressing need to sell. I mean money."

"I quite understand, thank you, Lieutenant. No, there was none. It just seemed much simpler for Mrs. Powner and me to go to my sister's home to live. There's plenty of room; my sister and her husband urged us to come."

"Urged?"

"I mean they—they made us very welcome."

"Then you and Mrs. Powner arrived here about four?"

"I think so."

"Yes," said a new voice, definitely. A woman's voice, full and low, with undertones of emotion and strain.

"What did you do?"

"Oh, we—talked with Mr. Sweetum a bit about the chances of a good sale. He told us about some advertising he was having done. Then we made a sort of—last journey through the house."

"Were you yourself agreeable to selling the place, Mr. Brigle?"

There was another very slight hesitation.

"Yes. That is, I regretted it, naturally; I was born here; my father—everything about the house was very closely associated with my father. We all regretted it. But it was, as I say, so obviously the sensible thing to do that I agreed, of course."

"And you, Mrs. Powner?"

"I?" There was a kind of well-bred surprise in the question. Then the full voice went on: "Why, I—yes, of course, I regretted the necessity. This house has been my home for a great many years. But at the same time I was in full accord with—with Cynthia." The undertones became more definite and her voice trembled. "With Mrs. Cavendish, that is. And, of course, it was not directly my concern."

"Exactly what relation were you to Judge Brigle, Mrs. Powner?"

"None at all. I am a cousin of Mrs. Brigle's. I came to take care of her—and remained when she died, to care for her children."

"How long ago was that?"

"Twenty-one years ago. Royal was a baby. Cynthia fifteen."

Fifteen, thought Susan. Going to dancing school and learning Latin verbs. A debut at eighteen, probably; marriage at twenty. A picture from some photogravure section floated mistily across Susan's memory. A picture of a woman in her early thirties, with blonde hair and a thin, long chin and nose; eyes set rather close above its thin bridge. "Mrs. Cary Cavendish, young society matron" assisting at some benefit.

Now she was dead, stabbed to death in that upstairs room. Susan moved a little closer to the fire.

"Do you mind if I ask your source of income, Mrs. Powner?" That was Lieut. Mohrn again—always peaceful, always kind until one moment came.

"Not at all. This was my home while Celia—Mrs. Brigle—lived. Then I was paid a salary until Judge Brigle died. At the time of his death he left me a fund which will permit me to live very comfortably."

"Then the sale of house did not affect you?"

"Not at all."

"Now about you, Mr. Brigle? Did you, or Mrs. Cavendish, derive money directly from the sale of the house?"

"Why, yes, of course. Both of us. Father left a will dividing everything equally between us. Except for Mrs. Powner and the servants and a few charities, there were no other beneficiaries."

"I see. Thank you. Now then, to get back to—this afternoon. You arrived at four and after talking for some time to Mr. Sweetum, you made a tour of the house. Did you see anything at all that struck you as being unusual? Out of place? Changed in any way? Please think carefully."

There was a long pause. Then Royal Brigle said hesitantly:

"Well, of course, everything was changed, Lieutenant. I mean, furniture moved about. The ballroom on the second floor was heaped with things to be sold. Everything was different. Some of the things we wanted to keep had been removed."

"Such as what?"

"Oh—some things Cyn—Mrs. Cavendish wanted. My own and Mrs. Powner's personal effects. A few good pictures which Cynthia had taken home; also the silver and a Minton dinner set."

A new voice spoke suddenly; it was fairly young, too, and crisp and without any expression at all. There was an instant's impression from that voice that the speaker was keeping a tight hold upon every nerve and muscle in his body.

"She took some of the more valuable things for use in her own home. It would have been a mistake to sell such things."

Cary Cavendish, it must be. Susan searched her memory for some knowledge of him but could find little. In business, she thought; very wealthy, she knew, and said to be discreetly and very cautiously gay; but that was only hearsay.

"Not very many things," said Mr. Sweetum in hasty parenthesis. "The sale is to be—was—is——" he floundered, leaped the breach and said: "We advertised *all* furnishings and that's really what it was."

"Thank you, Mr. Cavendish," said Lieut. Mohrn. "When did Mrs. Cavendish arrive, do you know?"

"I saw her last at lunch; we lunched together in the Loop. I only knew she intended to take a last look to be sure everything was ready for the sale to-morrow."

"Who let Mrs. Cavendish into the house? Or had she her own key?"

It was the first question which provoked any sort of suspicious response and that was only in the absence of response. For a sudden and rather lengthy silence followed the inquiry. Someone coughed and a chair was pushed over a parquet floor and finally Mr. Sweetum said anxiously: "I let her in. I don't believe she had a key."

"None of us had keys," said Royal Brigle's voice at once. "We gave them all to Mr. Sweetum."

"Then the house was locked?"

"Oh, yes, Lieutenant. I made sure of that. Every window, every door. Locked and bolted. It was a heavy responsibility, having all these valuable furnishings under my care. These *objets d'art*. I saw to it that every means of entrance was locked up tight. A mouse couldn't have got in. I'm sure of that." The auctioneer's voice was worried, but certain.

"Then you let Mrs. Cavendish into the house at four. Was there anything at all unusual in her behaviour?"

"No. Not at all. She was carrying some packages."

"Packages?"

"Some things of her own she wanted included in the sale. A lacquered Japanese coffee set. One of those metal plants that somebody had given her for a birthday present. A few things like that that she didn't want and thought might as well be sold for what I could get."

"I see. What did she do then?"

"Put them in the dining-room. On one of the side-tables. Then she went upstairs."

"And then?"

"Then?" The somewhat husky voice faltered. "Well—she stayed up there for some time. In fact she—she didn't come down."

Didn't come down. In the sombre room beyond was something very strange and dreadful and it crept on into the little room where Susan sat, and hovered about the brown panelled walls and the thick rugs and it was horror. She looked, in spite of herself, over her shoulder and round the room and into the shadows of the great stiff curtains and at the door into the little passage, which was closed.

Under its ominous influence Mr. Sweetum broke again, nervously, into speech.

"She went upstairs by the front way. I saw her. I was in the hall working at the clock. There're only two stairways. A front stairway up out of the hall and a back stairway off the kitchen. Miss Michelle was in the kitchen and she said nobody went up or down that stairway. And every one of us, Lieutenant, was downstairs. Every one of us, the whole time."

"Everyone. You mean you and Miss Michelle? And Mrs. Powner and Mr. Brigle and Mr. Cavendish?"

"Yes. That is, so," cried Mr. Sweetum. "Mrs. Powner and Mr. Brigle were downstairs—either in this room I imagine, or the recreation room beyond. Or the dining-room or morning room. That is, I mean they were on this floor and neither of them went upstairs. I, or Miss Michelle, would know if they had."

"There's an elevator off the dining-room," said Royal Brigle very calmly. A little, just a little, too calmly. "It isn't working however."

"I see. But how about Mr. Cavendish. Where were you when Mrs. Cavendish went upstairs?"

"I? I had not yet arrived, I suppose."

"*What's that!*" The Lieutenant's voice was sharp. Evidently his only knowledge of the affair, prior to the present inquiry, had been the report of the policeman in the squad car for that section.

"I was not here," said Cary Cavendish, coolly. "I arrived just before the—before it was discovered. According to the doctor, some half-hour after the crime was committed."

"That's right," cried Mr. Sweetum. "I let him in. Mrs. Cavendish had been upstairs for some time. At least an hour. Mr. Cavendish arrived and rung the bell. I opened the door. He took off his coat and said it was raining and asked where everybody was. I told him. Mrs. Cavendish looking over things upstairs. Mrs. Powner and Mr. Brigle, I thought, in the library. He went in and spoke to them. Then they came into the hall—Mr. Brigle, I believe first—and called to Mrs. Cavendish. She didn't——" It was becoming difficult for him to talk. Susan had an instant's vision—prophetic it proved to be later—of a little man, with mournful eyes—wiping his face anxiously and trying very hard to remain collected and calm when he was, actually, terrified. "She didn't answer," he said, past some stricture in

(*please turn over*)

his throat. "Mrs. Powner came out and called and started upstairs. But Mr. Cavendish said not to bother, he'd go, and Mrs. Powner stopped on the stairway and Mr. Cavendish ran past her and kept calling. We—we heard him cross the hall and then —then all at once his voice stopped. Stopped——"

"All right, all right. Mr. Cavendish—I know this is very painful to you but if you'll be so good——"

"You want me to tell you what I found, I suppose? Well, I—she was just there, you know. On her father's bed. Stabbed. Dead. Some—some blood." He stopped and coughed; somebody sobbed and somebody walked quickly across a bare strip of floor. "I—saw she was dead. I—I think I called the others. They came. I don't know—I can't remember. Somebody said to call the police. They did."

"Only one more question, if you please, Mr. Cavendish," said Lieutenant Mohrn. "Think carefully. Was there no weapon?"

"No, no. I'm sure of it. I looked. I—my first thought, of course, was suicide——"

"*Why?*"

"I—I don't know. She had no cause if that's what you mean. She had never threatened it. Anyway Cynthia—she wasn't the sort to commit suicide. But somehow one does think of that—rather than murder. I mean—well, murder—you know."

"So there was no weapo.'n'

"Nothing."

"I see," said the Lieutenant, slowly. "Thank you," He paused; then said abruptly: "Thank you. Will you please remain in the house for a time. I'll permit you to leave as soon as it is possible. Just at the moment——" there was motion and a murmur of voices and his voice drifted away as if he were walking toward the end of the room.

And that, thought Susan, was the situation. House locked up so that a mouse couldn't have got in. Only four persons beside Cynthia in the house. No one upstairs, except Cynthia. Cary Cavendish arriving after, according to the doctor, she was murdered.

House locked up: but were there no extra keys? Four persons besides Cynthia Cavendish herself; but the house was huge with a multitude of hiding-places—Susan paused there, however, to add parenthetically that by this time probably every square inch of the place had been searched. No one upstairs except Cynthia—always providing Sweetum and the girl assistant were to be eliminated from suspicion. And Cary Cavendish arriving after her murder; how did the doctor know when she'd been murdered? Obviously from the state of the body. The state? What did that mean exactly? The temperature? The coagulation of blood? What?

And these people. Impelled by a desire to see them she rose and walked to the door into the library. No one saw her and she stood there for some time. At the end of the long room were men—policemen, doctors, plain-clothes-men. Jim probably, was somewhere in that mêlée.

Nearer, were the family of the murdered woman. That large woman with taffy-coloured hair and a large white face—that must be Mrs. Powner. Dressed well and handsomely in black, with a wide black band to hold up the sagging muscles of her throat. Her large eyes were red with weeping; her mouth trembled rather loosely, her eyelashes were white and thick and her eyebrows a pencilled black line. She sat, however, stiff and majestic, speaking in a collected way, or listening to a man standing beside her.

The man was certainly Cary Cavendish for he was older than the dark, unhappy looking boy standing beside him. Cary was tall, well-built, though a little too well-fed and under-exercised; there were lines, however, in his face and his brown hair was grey over the temples.

The boy, Royal Brigle, was listening, too. Somehow Susan had an impression that it was his habit. He was slender and sallow and slightly stooped; his long chin was stubborn but his thin mouth was sensitive and introspective. Catastrophe hung over the three like a dark and threatening cloud.

At the window, black now and rainswept behind the folds of mustard-coloured damask, stood a slender little man with worried, large, dark eyes and a big nose, and a very pretty girl. Mr. Sweetum, registered Susan and noted the extreme prettiness of the girl. Then Jim Byrne materialised quite suddenly at her elbow.

They turned back into the morning-room and he stretched out his fine hands to the fire.

"Golly, it's cold," he said. "No wonder the auctioneer's got the sniffles. So's the girl. She's a pretty piece—or would be if she didn't have such a cold. Well, Susie—a neat murder."

"Neat!" said Susan, violently. "I think it's—dreadful. I've been listening."

"So I judged," said Jim.

"Who did it?" inquired Susan, concisely.

Jim rubbed his hands together over the hissing blue and red points of fire and stared thoughtfully downward.

"Three guesses."

"Three? You mean Sweetum and the girl are out of it?"

"Looks like it. After all, there's no connection. It's possible that Mrs. Cavendish, who doesn't seem to have been a particularly agreeable person, exasperated the girl to the point of picking up a bread knife and going after her, but it's a very slim possibility. Sweetum is too scared; too anxious to tell all to be guilty. Anyway, there's the question of motive again; he'd have no motive. There's no former connection between Sweetum or the girl and Mrs. Cavendish; I'm convinced of that. So that leaves, as I say, three guesses."

"If we except a prowler—thief—somebody getting into the house, intending to steal something perhaps, surprised by Mrs. Cavendish."

Jim nodded slowly.

"Of course, that's possible, too. It's a barn of a place. But Sweetum was awfully sure about its being locked up."

"Yes, I heard him. And about Cary Cavendish arriving after the murder. I suppose there's no doubt of that?"

Jim turned quickly. His grey-blue eyes had the deep, shining look that she knew so well.

"You mean he might have got into the place some way that the auctioneer doesn't know. Secret entrance or something like that?"

"Not that elaborate," said Susan. "I was only thinking of—oh, basement windows. Or a duplicate key. After all, there must have been a number of keys to the place."

"Oh, yes." Jim considered it. "Either's possible. And there are several doors besides the front and back entrances. A side door around by a study under the stairs. Some French doors leading on to a screened porch. And while the idea may have been that all the keys were given to the auctioneer, still it would be altogether possible to retain a few."

"One would be enough," said Susan.

"Yes. One would be enough. But even if anybody managed to gain entrance to the house unobserved, there's still the problem of getting upstairs without being seen either by the girl or Sweetum. And I think, at the moment anyway, we'll have to accept their testimony."

"What about Cary Cavendish," said Susan. They had been speaking in low voices; something in that house forbade candour and induced secrecy, and their hushed voices were due to that something as much as to the possibility of being overheard. And Susan heard her own voice drop to a whisper at the name of Cary Cavendish.

Jim's perfectly tailored grey shoulders lifted a very little.

"Mohrn questioned him. He seems to have an alibi. Says his office secretary saw him leave and probably noted the time. Mohrn's not been able to get the girl on the telephone yet. She's on her way home from the office, he supposes. What's the matter, Susie? You look as if you'd had a brain-wave."

"I don't know," said Susan slowly. "I was thinking of the temperature of the house. Of the possibility of robbery. Of whether or not anything —any valuable object, I mean, has vanished. Of the——" she stopped abruptly and at the same instant Jim heard it, too, and flung up his hand in quick caution. Yet it was only the faintest suggestion of a sound and its only significance lay in the fact that, somehow, it had seemed quite close to them. All through their talk they had been, both of them, conscious of a subdued movement and the faraway murmur of voices somewhere in the house —men going about their grisly business. They were conscious, too, of the groups in the library beyond, and of the feeling of sound and motion, that was dull from distance and besides it was an expected sound with nothing loud and nothing disturbing about it.

And the faint sound near them was not loud. But it was not expected and it was definitely disturbing.

But it was not repeated. And it was and remained an indefinable kind of rustle—not quite a footfall, not quite the closing of a door. Jim strode to the door into the little passage, opened it, looked out, vanished for a moment and returned to cross to the opposite side of the small room and glance sharply into the long library.

He returned.

"Nothing," he said. "But—the family have left the library. Odd."

"It might have been one of them, then. Listening."

"Might have been. Or it might have been mice in the walls. Well, no harm's done. Only indicates somebody was interested in what we were saying. And that itself doesn't mean anything in particular, beyond natural curiosity. You were saying——"

"I only thought that—well, if there was a thief—if he did manage to get away with anything surely Mr. Sweetum could check his lists of objects for sale and would know it."

"I suppose so. But I don't think anything of any value would have been left in the house. I mean—there'd be no jewels. And Mrs. Cavendish took the valuable pictures home, according to what they say. Of course, a petty thief surprised in the act, and perhaps with a criminal record already, might have preferred to do murder to being sent up again. Oh, yes, it's possible. Mohrn's already sent in for a pretty complete check of old offenders. They know about those things at headquarters. The more I see of police methods, the more I admire them. If it's anything like that they'll have their man in short order."

"An amateur," suggested Susan, rather diffidently. "Scared."

Jim nodded again. "Anything's possible at first. Then you begin to weed out the impossibilities. What did you mean by the temperature of the house?"

"I was thinking of the body. How did the doctor know about the time of death?"

"You mean the house being so cold would affect the normal temperature of the body—making it appear that the murder had occurred earlier than in fact it did?"

"Something like that."

Jim frowned.

"But that wouldn't affect the situation in any way at the moment. After all Cary Cavendish couldn't have entered the room, stabbed his wife, got away with the knife or whatever instrument were used, all while Mrs. Powner, Royal and Sweetum were listening in the lower hall. Besides it couldn't have been long before the doctor came. Possibly, even, she didn't die instantly; with stab wounds sometimes it takes a while." He shook his head. "That's out, I think."

Susan was inclined to agree.

"But there's another thing, Jim. The elevator. They all say it isn't working. Is it because it's disconnected, or because it's got something wrong with it?"

"Mohrn looked at it. It's a point, of course; if nobody got upstairs by either stairway then the only remaining way is by elevator. Mohrn didn't have much time and I don't know what he found out just then—if anything. If there's any possible way of making the thing work, then Mrs. Powner and Royal loom up pretty strongly in our list of suspects."

"But there were already, you said, three guesses. Mrs. Powner, Royal ——"

"And Cary Cavendish," said Jim. "Yes, I know I said that. Any one of them—or all of them might have had motives. But after listening to them, watching them, studying them, I'll be damned if I know what the motive could be. For everything—and you'll agree if you were listening, Susan—everything was exactly right. Shock, grief, decent reserve—keeping a stiff upper lip in public, honest desire to help the police. It's all there. A perfect surface." He paused, mused, repeated: "A perfect surface. Somebody's coming."

A confused group appeared at the doorway. Mrs. Powner with Royal at her elbow, appearing to support her. Cary Cavendish, harder and greyer, at

(*please turn to page 24*)

- ***Never seen a fish going hiking?***
- ***Never seen a lizard with two brains?***

Well, then, you should turn to the centre pages

MY MÁLAGA ADVENTURE

BY SIR PETER CHALMERS MITCHELL

Ex-chief of London's Zoo, the 73-year-old biologist remained at his villa in Málaga while Franco's gunboats and warplanes turned the peaceful, sunny town into a shambles; leaving only after he had been arrested by triumphant rebels and "rescued" by British bluejackets. He will describe his adventures in four extracts from his book, to be published next week.

BOMBED BY FRANCO

An aerial view of Málaga before the Rebels attacked it and below, a picture of the ruins of the German consulate

THE VILLA SANTA LUCIA

This record of events and inferences is centred on the Villa Santa Lucia, my house in Málaga, but for which I should not have experienced the former or drawn the latter.

I was a neutral in what became a Civil war, engaged neither in politics nor in arms. But in the next war, civil or international, everyone will be concerned.

It may be, therefore, that a record of the events, some trivial, some serious, some amusing, some tragic, and their effect on those who were neither scheming nor fighting, is of some value

This is the preface to Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell's book, "My House In Málaga," (published by Faber and Faber, 8s. 6d.) from which this and subsequent pieces are taken

LOOKING back, it is odd to reflect how much of all the ferment I failed to notice, or to understand the perils awaiting Spain. But the "tourist" season was over and I spent most of my time at home, busy with the translation of Ramón Sender's "Mr. Witt."

The continual strikes affected me not at all. Twice I had to drive to Gibraltar and back and my chauffeur asked, on some flimsy pretext, not to come with me. There had been some difficulty in getting petrol, but the garage told me that if I were to come early in the morning, whilst the night watchman was still in charge, I could get all I wanted.

In many of the villages there were surly-looking peasants, but by the simple device of stopping to ask them whether I were on the right road (an absurd question, because there is only one road from Málaga to Gibraltar), they were at once friendly.

I returned to London in midsummer, 1936, by sea, and came back overland through Madrid. I dined and slept in the Palace Hotel, where I met and had a long talk with two London officials, who had come to Madrid on some questions of international banking and clearing-house finance. We talked of many things, and they asked many questions about Spain, but I am certain that the possibility of a rebellion, leading to civil war, did not enter our heads.

Next morning I went out early, as I had intended to do some shopping in Madrid for my house in Málaga. But all the shops were closed, and presently it was clear that I had come into a general strike. Civil guards and armed police, some of them mounted, lurked in doorways and at the corners of the streets.

I had asked Ramón Sender, whom, until then, I knew only by correspondence, to meet me at the hotel, telling him that at one o'clock I should be alongside the bookstall in the foyer, tall, white-haired and excessively English in appearance. Exactly at the hour he came straight to me; of middle height, broad-shouldered, strongly built and with the friendliest of smiles.

He spoke no English, but was very encouraging to my Spanish, and after a glass of sherry, we got on famously at lunch. He told me that the strike was more a demonstration than anything else, that it was complete, but quite peaceful. And then he talked about the political situation, telling me that the Government would not listen to those who had been warning them of the plot of the Rights.

Notwithstanding his confidence in the future (he is a firm optimist, believing that somehow truth and justice must triumph over evil and privilege,) I could see that he was uneasy. Fascists, he told me, were extremely active in Madrid and through "toughs," paid and directed from their headquarters, had been doing their best to excite the passions of the populace and had been only too successful in getting violent responses from the sections who had little confidence in the power or will of the Government to carry out their election promises.

He was, therefore, hoping to be able to buy a small house and garden somewhere outside Madrid, in which his wife and children might be left in safety when he was otherwise engaged, and might even be unable to continue to pay the rent of their flat in Madrid.

On the other hand, he told me that he had taken a cottage for the autumn in the high Guadarrama and asked me to come to him for a few weeks where I should have a welcome, plain food and exciting air. And we were to talk literature, philosophy and politics and my Castilian was to become fluent.

As it happened, the rebellion broke out before I was due to join him there, and he and his family were enmeshed in the first wave of the rebel troops from Segovia.

After luncheon he took me to the Ateneo, the Madrid Liberal Club, often closed temporarily by reactionary governments, but that day its stately, portrait-laden rooms were thronged with excited politicians, journalists, literary and scientific men and women. Then we walked across the Retiro Park to a high block of new flats overlooking the Zoological Gardens where Sender introduced me to his wife and I contrived to make friends with his young son, then between two and three years old, and saw his daughter, still an infant in arms.

His wife, a tall and handsome young woman, was

(*please turn over*)

"I had been taken in the act of trying to succour one of their enemies, on the day when his Rebel friends had been raining down from the skies a bloody death on their own people"

the daughter of a bourgeois Catholic family and herself a Catholic. She was a musician by profession, but had learned typing, to assist her husband in his literary work. It was a home of work, love and laughter; I have never been in one in which the atmosphere breathed a completer happiness.

The rooms were light and spacious with large windows with a view high over the trees of the Retiro, and beyond them to the blue skies and distant blue mountains. Looking down one could see elephants and camels in the Zoological Gardens. Every room, simply furnished, was full of books and littered with children's toys, and the two maids, simple and friendly as their master and mistress, had the same freedom of the whole flat as the children.

It was not until many months later that I knew what befell that happy family. Sender had disappeared in the lurid opacity of the war. Late in autumn, I knew that he was still alive, had been speaking on the radio from Madrid and, from references in the local newspapers, that he had joined the army of the people and had published accounts of the heroic resistance made by badly-armed peasants and badly-equipped militia to the machine-guns and foreign tanks, aeroplanes and field-guns of the rebel armies.

I hoped that he was still alive, but got no answer to letters I sent to Madrid, to Barcelona and to Valencia. Then, just after Christmas, a letter came, sent on from London to which Sender had addressed it, not knowing that I too, although in a very small and non-combatant way, was in Spain; a sympathiser with his cause.

Sender has related the facts in a few reticent words in his own book on the War (published by Faber & Faber in London in an English translation under the title "The War in Spain, a Personal Narrative," and has begged me to make no comment. But comment is unnecessary.)

When Fascist hordes first came up the mountains from Segovia, Sender with his friend, the Director of State Forests (also on holiday in the Guadarrama, with his wife and children,) decided to tramp through the mountain forests, the road being over-run by the enemy, to find out what was happening and if there were transport from the town to Madrid.

It was impossible to try to take with them young children on a laborious and dangerous traverse. Moreover, they were confident that the uprising was only a local affair that would be suppressed in a few days and, in any case, although we all learned the bitter lesson later, they did not imagine that an aristocratic-fascist rising could be any danger to women and children.

Still further, a brother-in-law and his wife, of completely Right sympathies were also in the cottage. But in a day or two the brother-in-law and sister deserted the children and went off to Segovia, the local rebel headquarters, with a better judgment than Sender's of what their friends were likely to do, and determined at least that they should save their own skins.

Things began to look dangerous, and Mrs. Sender took her children off to a town within rebel territory, in which, however, her family was well-known and respected. But there she found that two of her own brothers and also Sender's brother, whose only crime was that he had been chosen for local office after the elections of February, had been shot by the rebels.

She went to the Governor and asked for a permit to leave Spain with her two infants. She was at once arrested and sent to prison. After a month's detention, without charge or trial, a priest was sent in to her to hear her confession, and next morning she was taken to the cemetery and shot.

But even in Fascist territory, kind hearts had taken the risk of befriending the babies. Sender heard nothing of what had happened until a message got through to him towards the end of the year. Through the International Red Cross, a Swiss doctor retrieved the children, and Sender, on short leave from the front, was able to rejoin them in France.

These events, although so near in the future, were very far from our minds in Madrid, when in the evening, the strike being still in operation, Sender most kindly helped me to carry my bag from the hotel to the South station through streets that were empty of traffic but filled with animated, although quite orderly groups.

My car met me at the station in Málaga next morning, and all seemed peaceful in the town. As two delicate English ladies wished to come to me as guests in late autumn, I wrote to Sender asking what he thought about it, and he replied reassuring me. During the next fortnight or so nothing happened to alarm me.

I was hard at work in the mornings, went by foot, or in my car, to the club before lunch and in the afternoons often drove out to a favourite bathing beach on the road to Marabella. Then the rebellion came as a crash and complete surprise, at least to me.

I had finished my writing for the day about four o'clock on Saturday afternoon, July 18, and thought of going out to bathe. But it was hot; I was lazy, and the chauffeur had been given the afternoon off. I decided instead to read a novel in the garden. I was startled at about five o'clock by the sound of heavy firing from over the low hill which separated me from central Málaga. The firing died down in a very short time, but I had discarded my novel and was on the terrace with my servants, in anxious curiosity.

Great columns of smoke rose over the hill and, as the brief twilight faded, it showed the flickering glow of flames. But there was nothing to be done and we did nothing. I told María to serve my solitary meal in the outside dining-room, turned away from the west and looking down the Limonar, the fashionable suburb, to the sea.

After dinner I sat out of doors until long after midnight and watched the smoke and flames, with occasional bursts of firing, slowly creeping along the sea-front towards the Miramar Hotel and the Caleta. But everything was quiet near me, and I locked up and went to bed, arranging my clothes so that I could dress in a hurry.

Next morning I was out early in my pyjamas and dressing-gown and saw that the western and southern sky was black with rolling clouds. From time to time there were crashes and clouds of sparks as roofs fell in, and houses in the Limonar were blazing in full sight. The morning air was laced with the reek of smoke. All Sunday morning the

flames came closer and closer to me, villa after villa along the Limonar bursting into flames.

During the morning Doña Mercedes Bolin, wife of Tomas Bolin, owner of the splendid mansion separated from my garden by a water-course, dry except after rain in the mountains, came up my garden path with one of her daughters. The mansions and villas in the Limonar were ablaze, including the house of her brother-in-law.

It seemed certain that their turn would come next. She had five young daughters. Would I not take them into my house if the trouble came nearer? Naturally I agreed, and showed them the scanty accommodation, with which they were pleased, and assured me that in any case all would be well in a day or two.

They went back and I went on with my typewriting. Then, suddenly, I remembered that because of the shop strike my larder was bare, and I hurried down the garden to warn them, if they did come, to bring some food with them. I met a melancholy procession hurrying across to me.

First, two maids with huge bundles, then three tall daughters, two babies of about six and five, then Doña María, the grandmother, and a nursery governess.

Some way behind them came Doña Mercedes and her husband, also heavily laden. They had stayed behind, to lock up the house after turning out those of the staff who had not already fled.

We chatted in the *sala* for a few minutes, as Doña Mercedes was the only member of the family to whom I had ever spoken, and then arranged how everyone was to be stowed away for the night. My visitors were all that was courteous and insisted that I should keep my own bedroom and dressing-room.

Three small rooms and bathroom upstairs were allotted to the grandmother, the babies, and their nursery governess. For the three older girls we arranged mattresses and pillows on the floor in the *sala*, and their mother had a couch in the same room. Two armchairs made a bed like a large cradle for Don Tomas in my study and, somehow or other, my María and Lola contrived to accommodate the two new maids. Only one thing disappointed me. All the family, except Don Tomas, spoke English extremely well, so that I had no chance of improving my halting Spanish.

The rest of the day and the evening were rather miserable, as the flames came nearer and nearer, and at any moment we expected to see the Bolins' house also in flames. It was visible two hundred yards away, on the same level as my house, its garden and grounds, dipping down steeply to the little water-course between us. But the worst did not happen.

On the other hand, all afternoon and in the evening until it was too dark to see, old men, women and children hurried along the Camino Nuevo and up and down the little lane in front of my house, laden with all kinds of furniture, clothing, books, provisions; anything they could carry out of the burning houses.

The stream of plunderers continued on the Monday, and houses were still smouldering or sending up columns of sparks as walls and roofs crashed. But we were in better spirits; we had all slept well and nothing seemed to be about to happen to us, although flagged cars with armed men dashed up and down the Camino Nuevo.

About the middle of the morning, one of these cars came up the Bolins' avenue and halted, hooting loudly, outside the gates by the lodge of the porter, who, apparently, opened to them. Rather rashly, I offered to go across to see what could be done and the Bolins eagerly accepted the offer, possibly a little selfishly as they at least believed that the town was being sacked.

And so, in some mental discomfort, I hurried down the garden, but once across the brook, I went a little way round so as to come up the avenue facing the intruders and not taking them by surprise through the bushes at the side. Two men, on guard at the gates, pointed revolvers at me. I waved airily at them, took out a cigarette from my case and went up to them and asked for a light, which one of them gave me at once; and then both accepted cigarettes from me, lighting them at mine.

One of the two, leaving the other on guard, walked with me through the inner courtyard to the garage. The doors had been broken open, and some of the men were trying to start the cars. Again revolvers were pointed, but my companion clapped me on the shoulder, and all was well. The leader was an educated man and we understood each other. They had come for the cars. I said that I could not stop them, but asked them to respect the house. They agreed and, when they went off, left a written notice on the gates, stating that the cars had been taken and the house was not to be entered. I hurried back, well pleased with my first introduction to these armed men.

As I came up the garden, Don Tomas came to meet me; I must say that he was relieved that no evil had happened to me, but gave me the impression that somehow I ought to have done more for him.

Monday night was quiet; everything seeming deserted round about us, although there were still occasional plunderers hurrying past with their booty.

After luncheon the next day, I went down to the town in quest of news, for we did not know what was happening.

I wandered through the main street, a scene of desolation, as many of the shops had been burnt out, and were still smouldering. There were sight-seers like myself—men, women and children—gazing at the ruins with a kind of dismayed curiosity.

But the general atmosphere was one of relief, almost of gaiety. The shops in the side-streets, most of which were undamaged, began to open; shoppers appeared, and the trams began to run. I myself felt completely safe, and gave a friendly "salud" to one or two of the patrols who seemed to be looking at me rather curiously.

Clearly there was no trouble for anyone who was not a Fascist. Later in the afternoon, the Civil Governor drove through the streets being cheered everywhere, and made a number of romantic speeches, reported in the local papers next morning, about the "new Spain that would arise from the ashes."

He was a well-educated, youngish politician, appointed from Madrid; certainly a supporter of the Government, but very far from being a Communist, Syndicalist or Anarchist, and was getting the town well in hand. None of the perversions of fact that reached England was further from the truth than that Málaga was in the "hands of the Communists." The rebellion had been put down, order was being restored quickly, and all was well.

When I told the Bolins what was happening, they seemed to me not at all specially pleased that all was over. They had expected, or at least hoped for, a different result. We sat over tea in the garden, and then a curious incident occurred. It was now the third day they had been my guests, and I realised the existence of a slight awkwardness in conversation, although no people could have shown better manners.

I had been their nearest neighbour for at least two years and it had not yet dawned on me that they didn't know my name.

"I am afraid you don't know my name."

"No; please tell us."

"It is Mitchell—Chalmers Mitchell."

"And how do people address you?"

"Well, everyone round about here calls me Don Pedro, but English people I know call me Sir Peter."

"*Sir* Peter!"

Silence. A family conversation must have taken place, for afterwards when we met at dinner, Doña María said: "Your servants seem to be attached to you, but they always speak of you as 'Don Pedro,' or the 'señorito.'"

"Yes, we get on very well, but I wish I understood them better. The way they talk Spanish is very difficult for me."

"I don't mean that, but as you are Sir Peter, why don't they call you that?"

"But, of course, this is Spain."

"Your servants in England, what do they call you?"

I realised with amusement that I was being cross-examined delicately.

"Naturally, they call me Sir Peter; I think they liked it very much when I was knighted a few years ago."

It is difficult to find words for the exact change in our relations that followed. From the first moment they all had been more than polite, gracious, courteous to an extreme, but now I was at once accepted as one of their own kind, a personal friend who naturally befriended them, and not merely out of courtesy.

Unawares, they had been entertained by an angel. Through the long and sometimes dangerous days and weeks that followed, Doña María never fully realised that I was not looking forward as confidently and anxiously as she herself, to the victory of Franco.

Doña Mercedes, on the other hand, with whom I had many long and intimate talks, knew my real opinions, but supposed, in excuse, that from ignorance, I was applying social and political opinions, possibly even respectable in England, to Spain.

A few fragments of conversation: One evening when Doña María was telling me, as she often and very naturally did, of the splendours of her mansion near Bilbao, and of her luxurious flat in Madrid, she

(*please turn to page* 36)

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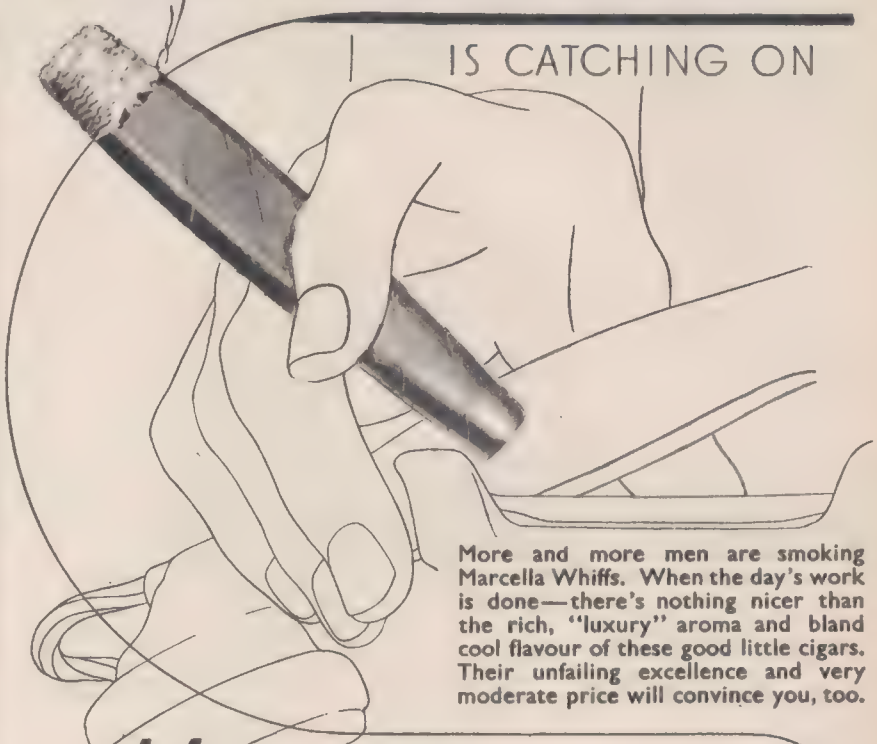

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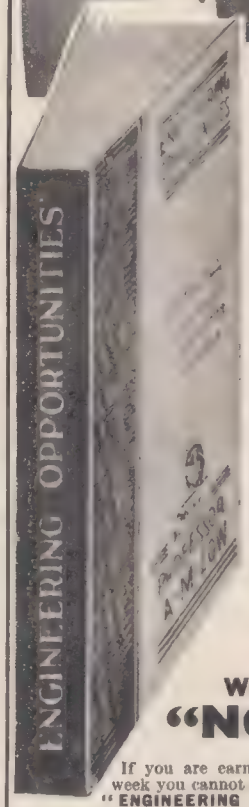

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BEND IN THE LANE

SHORT SHORT STORY
of a woman who was tempted after she had been taken from the things she loved and her husband branded as a felon

BY HOLLOWAY HORN

ILLUSTRATED BY STANLEY LLOYD

"It's nice of you to come all this way to see me, Wallace." She was standing just inside the doorway

WALLACE CURRER had some difficulty in finding Mrs. Langridge's house, but ultimately came on it at the bottom of a lonely lane outside the town.

He remembered the elderly maid who answered the door; she had been with Meriel at the flat in London. "I think Mrs. Langridge is expecting me," he said.

The maid conducted him to a small room overlooking a lawn at the far side of which a bearded gardener was putting out bedding plants: "I'll tell Mrs. Langridge," the maid said.

The view from the window was utterly peaceful and Currer watched the methodical movements of the gardener with a pensive expression on his face. He realised that the man was probably making in a year rather less than he himself did in a week and, moreover, that he was getting far more satisfaction out of life in spite of it.

He turned sharply as the sound of the opening door reached him.

"Meriel!" he said.

"It's nice of you to come all this way to see me, Wallace." She was standing just inside the doorway.

"If you'd let me know where you were living I'd have been here before—as you know."

"Perhaps that was why I didn't let you know. But do sit down. Sarah will bring in tea."

"She didn't seem too pleased to see me, either."

Meriel Langridge smiled: "She was devoted to Peter," she said.

"Poor Peter! You're as beautiful as ever, Meriel."

"Thank you. The simple life evidently suits me!"

"How you can stand it after living right in the middle of things beats me."

She shrugged her shoulders: "I was glad to escape . . . after the crash. Down here no one knows who I am."

"Thank God you've some money of your own."

"I do," she said simply.

The maid came in with the tea and set out the table in silence.

"How . . . how *is* Peter?" the visitor asked when she had gone.

"I don't hear from him . . ." she said, defensively.

"He's abroad, of course?" The question in his words was barely perceptible.

"The police apparently think so."

"Yes."

"I get so tired of the police, Wallace."

"But they don't worry *you*?" he asked, in surprise.

Again she shrugged her shoulders: "I had to go up to town the other day. An unmistakable detective was waiting for me at Waterloo and trailed me until I got back to the station in the evening. He parked himself outside the restaurant where I had lunch and outside the shops I went into. At Waterloo, I said to him: 'Well, good-bye!' And he grinned all over his face."

"It's intolerable!" he burst out.

"It's inevitable, I'm afraid. After all, they want Peter very badly and they think that sooner or later I shall lead them to him."

"I was talking to Blaumberg about him a day or so ago."

"He was one of the gang that set the trap for Peter. He and the others were every bit as much to blame."

"I know. But that's life. Peter trusted people too much. I always told him so."

"If they had been decently loyal to him he'd have weathered the storm and would have adjusted everything."

Currer nodded: "It's a pity—forgive me, but I can't help saying it—it's a pity he didn't face things."

"He wanted to. It was I who wouldn't let him—I who suggested the way out that he took. Why should he alone have faced the hatred and the hostility the smash had caused? Legally he was in the wrong—that much is clear—but Blaumberg and those others were morally more to blame than he was. If he had had a little of their cunning and they a little of his loyalty, things would have fallen out differently.

"You wouldn't have been living under a cloud. This kind of thing is all right now—in the spring and summer—but you *can't* exist here in winter."

"I did, very comfortably, last winter. We have the wireless and log fires . . ." she smiled.

"Meriel, I love you!" he burst out. "I've always loved you! You knew it in London."

"Yes, I knew. You made it unmistakable. And I made it equally clear, I fancy, that you were wasting your time."

"But things are different now. That's why I came down here to-day."

"In what way are they different?"

"Peter . . . Peter's gone. He might as well be dead. What life is it for you?"

"That's rather my affair, don't you think?" she asked, gently.

"Meriel, I'm going to Monte Carlo on Saturday."

"Good luck!" she smiled. "The last time I was there I actually made a few francs."

"I want you to come with me. No . . . think it over before you decide. We could spend the week-end in Paris and you could get the kind of clothes you should be wearing."

For a moment or so she did not reply.

"The curious part is that I'm not annoyed with you," she said, thoughtfully, breaking the silence. "I can dimly understand your point of view."

"Then come!" he urged.

But she shook her head.

"Why not?"

"There are many reasons—not the least that I'm married and am in love with my husband still."

"Married!" he echoed.

"For good or ill," she said. "And even if I were not, to be quite frank, Wallace, you don't attract me in the least."

"But that sort of thing—attraction and the like—is for children."

"And you're fat and bald," she laughed. "Sorry! That was unkind. But you *are*, and the thought of going with you to Monte is rather funny. I'm sorry, but you asked for it!"

"This devotion to a memory is . . . is morbid," he protested.

"Nonsense. I happen to love my husband, as I said just now. I know it sounds very stuffy and old-fashioned but it's true."

"You're definite in turning me down?"

"Quite," she said, with unmistakable firmness. "How is your wife, by the way, Wallace?"

He shrugged his shoulders: "All right—as far as I know. She's been living in Florence for the last six months."

"A delightful town," she said, with a smile.

"I . . . I thought you'd have said 'Yes,'" he said after a pause.

"You know better now. You won't come down again, will you?"

He glanced at her in surprise.

"I mean it," she said. "I've cut clean away from the old life. And in any case it's not the slightest use."

"But surely I can see you sometimes? You said that you came to town occasionally."

"Very rarely."

"But you can have lunch with me?"

"No," she said. "I don't want to see you again, Wallace."

"It's . . . it's not very friendly."

"You and I can never be friends. And, to be brutally frank, I don't particularly want to be."

"That's blunt, anyway."

"It's honest. I learnt that from Peter."

"Oh, damn Peter!" he burst out. "I've loved you ever since I first saw you."

"I suppose that's true, more or less."

"You know it's true!"

"And therefore I ask you not to come down here again."

"But I want to help you!"

"I don't need help. I'm making a new life and forgetting the other. And I don't want to be reminded of it."

"There doesn't seem to be much else to say!" he said, bitterly.

"There's nothing else to be said," she amended.

"Well . . . good luck. You don't mind my wishing you that?"

"No. And I wish you the same."

"You might remember me to Peter when you write or see him again. Apart from you, I always liked him. And I always thought he had a damned rough deal from Blaumberg's bunch."

"You *know* that he did," she said, quietly.

"Ah, well, I suppose I'd better be going."

She went with him to his car.

"I was hoping that I shouldn't go back alone," he said.

"I'm sorry! Good-bye!"

"You're sure there's nothing I can do?"

"Sure," she said.

"I suppose, sooner or later you'll go out to him?"

"Perhaps."

He started the engine and glanced at her with a queer, hungry look in his eyes.

"Good-bye!" he said again.

She stood where he had left her until his car rounded the bend in the road which shut it from her sight and her world.

Slowly she turned and walked across the neatly cut lawn to where the bearded gardener was clipping a yew hedge.

"He's gone!" she said, "and I don't think he will come back."

"He'd have had a bit of a shock if he'd recognised me!" the gardener said.

She smiled: "You're safe here, Peter. It's the very last place where they would expect to find you."

Mr. and Mrs. Ressler and Marjorie crowded the door, goggling. Mrs. Ressler made hysterical clucking noises. Marjorie's eyes were on Clarence

GREEN MONKEY TRICKS

Mr. Belvedere Tipp shoots straighter than Cupid in this Modern Comedy of Errors, involving a pet monkey, a tin of paint, a tearful bride, and a scheming young husband

BY A. R. V. NELSON-SMITH

ILLUSTRATED BY J. DEWAR MILLS

"I DO hope, Mr. Tipp, that you won't find my problem too trifling," murmured the pale young man, with wispy hair.

Belvedere Tipp smiled deprecatingly and pushed a silver cigarette box, presented to him by the late Lord Lugger, towards his client. Long years spent as butler to half the best families in the land, had made him an astute judge of character long before his last master left him the legacy with which he had started his strange business of Delicate Missions, Limited.

"I assure you, Mr. Byflow, that I regard no problem as trifling. Some of my biggest cases have sprung from the smallest seeds—if you will pardon the metaphor."

Clarence Byflow puffed nervously at his cigarette and studied the discreetly curtained window.

"I'm engaged to be married," he said abruptly.

"My dear sir! Allow me to offer my congratulations. And, if I may make so bold, also to the fortunate young lady!"

"She's the trouble," said Clarence Byflow, gloomily.

Belvedere Tipp's rather egg-shaped and almost bald head bent forward with grave concern.

"You may rely completely on my discretion, sir . . ."

"Oh, well," said the young man, resignedly. "If you're going to help, I suppose you've got to know all about it. It's a monkey."

"Sir?" A slight stiffening of Belvedere Tipp's attitude indicated his distaste at any suspicion of levity.

"I told you it would sound silly. A monkey coming between a man and his fiancée. That's a good one, isn't it?"

The gathering clouds on Belvedere Tipp's brow lifted a little.

"Stranger things, sir, have come between a gentleman and his intended. In what way is the animal offending?"

"It's *there*, that's all. Dammit, I don't want to start married life with a monkey as well as a wife!"

"H'm!" Belvedere Tipp thoughtfully studied the comfortable dome-shaped expanse where his sober black waistcoat embraced his dignified striped trousers. "I take it, sir, that you have an aversion to the animal?"

"It's unspeakable!" Clarence Byflow shuddered. "It—it—even roots about in my hair!"

"Dear me!" There was real sympathy in Belvedere Tipp's tone. "And the young lady, I take it, is excessively fond of the animal?"

"Fond of it!" The young man emitted a hollow laugh. "She'd have it as Best Man if I gave her half a chance."

"Pity! Pity!" murmured Belvedere Tipp. For a moment he studied his client in silence. Then: "When you first met the young lady, sir, I take it that the animal was not—er—so much in prominence?"

"I wouldn't say that." Clarence Byflow looked slightly uncomfortable. "As a matter of fact, it was. The way that Benbow took to me was one of the things that made Marjorie decide that she'd marry me. I never thought she'd want to keep the brute afterwards."

Belvedere Tipp leant back in his chair with an air of complete understanding.

"Might I venture to suggest, sir, that you were—er—inclined to encourage the animal yourself?"

"Dammit, I had to, hadn't I?"

"Of course, sir! Of course!" Belvedere Tipp's tone was soothing. "The way, sir, of a man with a maid. And the young lady's family—what is their attitude?"

"They're as dippy about it as she is."

"Are they monkey experts? Do any of them really know anything about monkeys?"

"Not a thing! They're always making Benbow ill by giving him too much to eat."

"I suppose, sir, there is no possibility of their retaining the animal after you're married?"

"Not a hope. They've got it all worked out. Benbow's Marjorie's monkey and she must have him. But they're going to come and see him every day."

Belvedere Tipp's sympathy deepened.

"I suppose, sir, the animal couldn't be—er—lost?"

Clarence Byflow jumped up in alarm.

"Good Lord!" he cried, "You can't do that! She'd make me scour the country till the thing was found. And if it wasn't . . ." He shrugged despairingly. "Life would be one long moan."

"Then," said Belvedere Tipp, persuading him back into his chair, "we must find some other way. I take it, sir, that all you're concerned with is marrying the young lady without having to bear the burden of the animal, but also without injuring the animal's welfare?"

The young man brightened. "That's right," he said.

"Very well, sir, I will accept the case. But I shall require your co-operation."

"You shall have it," said Clarence Byflow, fervently.

"Then, sir, if you will come back after lunch, I shall have evolved a plan. Good day to *you*, sir!"

As Clarence Byflow went gratefully out, Miss Firkin, the spinsterly and efficient secretary of Belvedere Tipp and the only other member of the firm, staggered in with The Ledger, an enormous brassbound affair in which Belvedere Tipp entered every little detail of all his cases.

"Sit down, Miss Firkin," instructed Belvedere Tipp, opening the ledger at a blank page, "and take a careful note of what I say."

As she listened, Miss Firkin's countenance grew increasingly frigid. At the end she rose primly, snapping her notebook shut.

"Of course, Mr. Tipp, I always obey your instructions without question, but I should like you to know that there are certain elements in this case that do not appeal to me."

"The animal, Miss Firkin?"

"The monkey, Mr. Tipp."

"You will find there is no cause for alarm, Miss Firkin."

"I trust not, Mr. Tipp."

"Then that will be all for the present, Miss Firkin. When Mr. Byflow comes back, show him in at once. Meanwhile, please have some lunch sent to me—three beef sandwiches, without mustard, a small gooseberry tart, and . . . and . . ."

"A nice apple, Mr. Tipp?"

"A nice apple, Miss Firkin."

The actions of Clarence Byflow, after his second interview with Belvedere Tipp, were hurried and furtively eager. At a little shop round the corner he bought a tin of green paint and a large, soft paint-brush. Armed with these, he made his way to his fiancée's home, secure in the knowledge that both she and her mother were playing bridge many

"One moment," said Belvedere Tipp, "I must complete my diagnosis." He offered the thermometer to Benbow who thought it was a new kind of nut and opened his mouth eagerly

miles away. His amazement when the maid informed him of this fact was well assumed.

"Then I'll have to wait," he said, resting one hand Napoleonically across his chest to support the paint tin that lay, all too insecurely, beneath his tightly buttoned coat.

But as soon as the maid was safely back in her own quarters, he slipped quietly through the hall, up the stairs and into the little room where Benbow was confined, at the end of a long chain whenever the family was out, his simian sense of humour, when not properly supervised, having caused many a domestic eruption.

When Clarence came down again, red in the face and sticky round the collar, a puzzled and wrathful Benbow was a brilliant emerald green from the top of his head to the tip of his tail.

Telephoning Marjorie was something of an ordeal, but Clarence knew his stuff. Marjorie heard him with growing horror.

"Darling!" she gasped. "Whatever can it be? He's *never* changed colour before! Do you think it's serious? Have you 'phoned father? Well, p'raps you're right; we don't want to frighten him. How lucky you were there, darling! I must break the news to mother. . . . Yes, we're coming back right away."

"One moment!" said Clarence firmly, "I don't know, mind you, but it may be urgent. Now, I met a man at lunch to-day who's one of the biggest experts on monkeys in the world. Fellow called Tipp. I think I can get him to come round; we don't want to run any risks."

"Oh, darling, how marvellous! Whatever should I do without you! Do hurry and get him! Poor, dear Benbow. Is he suffering?"

"Not at present," said Clarence grimly. There was a satisfied gleam in his eye as he replaced the receiver. The rest was up to Belvedere Tipp.

The first arrivals were Marjorie and her mother in a taxi; Marjorie still all flutter-flutter, Mrs. Ressler in her highest state of dither. Clarence, with the calm of a great man facing a crisis, barred their way at the foot of the stairs.

"Tipp is on the way," he said, reassuringly, "but until he comes no one is to go near Benbow. He thinks it may be contagious."

"I don't care," cried Mrs. Ressler wildly, "he *shall* see his grandmuzzer if he wants to, poor 'ickle fellow. . . ."

"Wait, mother," urged Marjorie, standing by Clarence, "wait until father comes. He'll know what to do."

They had not long to wait. Several minutes before Belvedere Tipp was due, Mr. Ressler had sunk his five and a half feet of respectable prosperity into his favourite armchair amid the excited expostulations of his wife and daughter.

"Do?" he grunted, "what can we do? Best keep away if it's catching. Wait and see what this Tipp fellow says. We'll have him cured if it costs me a hundred."

Clarence glanced a little anxiously at his watch, but his anxiety was unfounded, for Belvedere Tipp was punctual to the minute. He had discarded his customary bowler for a silk hat, while in his hand he carried a small black bag. On Mrs. Ressler and Marjorie his effect was immediate and soothing. Mr. Ressler he treated with the deference due from one authority to another, while his manner towards Clarence was that of an old but not too familiar friend.

"Lead me to the little fellow," he said, with professional briskness.

"*I* will," cried Clarence quickly.

The others followed cautiously.

"I hope he hasn't gone savage," muttered Mr. Ressler, motioning his wife and daughter back, as Clarence opened the door.

Belvedere Tipp went in first. At the sight of him, Benbow, who for the past hour had been contemplating and exploring with mystified incredulity those parts of his anatomy that he could see, leapt across the room at the end of his chain like a jack-in-the-box, and landed on Belvedere Tipp's shoulder. His emerald green arm stretched out eagerly towards Belvedere Tipp's head but, finding it shorn of vegetation, he dropped to the ground with a squeal of disappointment.

Mr. and Mrs. Ressler and Marjorie crowded the door, goggling. Mr. Ressler passed his hand once or twice across his eyes and shivered at the memory of the only other time he had seen a monkey that colour. Mrs. Ressler made hysterical clucking noises. Marjorie's eyes were on Clarence.

"Don't touch him, darling!" she cried, "Oh, *do* be careful!"

But Clarence had already picked up the protesting Benbow.

"I don't care," he said recklessly, carrying the monkey to Belvedere Tipp.

Belvedere Tipp examined him gravely, handed him back to Clarence, opened his little black bag, and produced a thermometer.

"What is it?" cried Mrs. Ressler and Marjorie together.

"One moment!" said Belvedere Tipp. "I must complete my diagnosis." He offered the thermometer to Benbow who, thinking it was a new kind of nut, opened his mouth eagerly and did his best to swallow it. Finding it less appetising than he thought, he soon ejected it.

Belvedere Tipp retrieved the thermometer from

(*please turn to page* 17)

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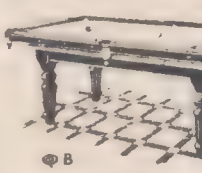

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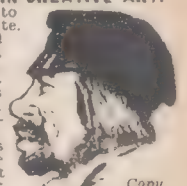

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the floor and held it up to the light. He shook his head.

"As I feared," he said, "Simian Chameleonosis."

"What!" cried Clarence. "Not that!"

Belvedere Tipp nodded profoundly.

"Good goodness!" breathed Mr. Ressler, "what is it?"

"Very obscure, sir," said Belvedere Tipp, "very rare. I haven't come across a case since the days when I bred apes in the Bahamas."

Mrs. Ressler threw up her hands and moaned.

"Will he live?" cried Marjorie.

Benbow suddenly leapt out of Clarence's arms and initiated a game of football with Belvedere Tipp's hat.

"With care," said Belvedere Tipp, rescuing his hat and examining it anxiously for any tell-tale green smudges. "With great care and expert treatment he stands an even chance."

"Well, what have we got to do?" demanded Mr. Ressler, suddenly businesslike. "Whom do we send for? I don't care what it costs."

Belvedere Tipp glanced at Clarence and thoughtfully jingled the massive gold watch chain presented to him by the late Viscount Turret.

"Mr. Tipp is a great expert on monkeys himself," Clarence reminded his future father-in-law.

"I doubt," put in Belvedere Tipp, modestly studying the carpet, "if there is anyone else in this country who would know how to treat a case of Simian Chameleonosis."

"Then, sir," cried Mr. Ressler, stepping forward dramatically, "will you save Benbow?" His wife and daughter ranged themselves suppliantly beside him.

"Stand back!" warned Belvedere Tipp, snatching up Benbow. "You may catch it." He glanced admiringly at Clarence. "Already this young man has bravely risked infection for the sake of your little monkey."

Mr. Ressler grabbed hold of his wife and Marjorie and hustled them to the door.

"Clarence!" breathed Marjorie, adoringly.

"Well? Will you?" demanded Mr. Ressler. "Name your own fee."

"Very well," said Belvedere Tipp, with a show of hesitation, "I will. But the little fellow must come away with me. I cannot treat him here."

"Oh! Oh! Oh!" wailed Mrs. Ressler. "I couldn't *bear* it! It would kill him. He's never left us before . . ."

"Where are you taking him?" asked Marjorie.

"To my zoological sanatorium in Acacia Road, where he will be nursed back to health under my personal supervision. He will be quite happy there, my dear young lady."

"Oh, dear! He'll get mixed up with a lot of other monkeys," moaned Mrs. Ressler.

"On the contrary, madam. At the moment I have no other animals whatever in my sanatorium."

"If it's for his own g-g-good," cried Marjorie, dabbing her eyes, "he'd b-b-better g-g-go."

"I suppose we can visit him?" said Mr. Ressler.

Again Belvedere Tipp glanced at Clarence. "Not for the first day or two," he said. "When he is convalescent—yes!"

From the safety of the doorway Mr. Ressler surveyed the situation. "We must steel ourselves for the parting," he announced.

"It would be better," suggested Belvedere Tipp, "if the ladies were to retire. It will lessen the pang. So if you will be so good, sir, as to have a taxi called for me while Mr. Byflow will, perhaps, fetch a shawl in which to wrap the little fellow up . . ."

"His l-l-little c-c-coat," said Marjorie. "I'll f-f-fetch his l-l-little c-c-coat."

"I'll get it," cried Clarence, running after her.

When Clarence returned Belvedere Tipp was alone with Benbow, who was again exhibiting a keen exploratory interest in his own anatomy. He offered no objection to being clothed in his Coronation coat of red, white and blue wool and, while Clarence was unfastening the chain, he placed an arm affectionately round Belvedere Tipp's neck and took a tentative bite at his ear.

"Taxi's ready," called Mr. Ressler, gruffly, from the hall.

Winding the chain securely around his wrist, Belvedere Tipp proceeded downstairs as sedately as the presence of Benbow permitted. As he crossed the pavement to the taxi a short sighted old lady threw him a penny. Clarence and Mr. Ressler watched from the doorstep as the taxi drove away. Mrs. Ressler and Marjorie waved sadly from the window.

The "zoological sanatorium" which was to be Benbow's temporary abode, was none other than the flat occupied by Miss Firkin. Since he lived in a private hotel which prided itself upon a rigid observance of the conventions, Belvedere Tipp could hardly be expected to attend to this part of the case himself. His appearance when he arrived spoke of a by no means uneventful journey.

Miss Firkin stared and recoiled a little.

"He's a little boisterous," observed Belvedere Tipp, disentangling himself with difficulty. "He'll quieten down when you've given him something to eat."

Miss Firkin took one look at the monkey.

"Hideous!" she said.

"You'd better get busy on him right away, Miss Firkin. We don't want to keep him longer than is necessary. Have you got the turpentine?"

"Yes, Mr. Tipp, I have. And would you kindly chain the brute up before you leave me? You can fasten it to the leg of the ottoman."

Belvedere Tipp produced a large bag of nuts from his pocket.

"I suggest, Miss Firkin, that you let him eat as many of these as he chooses. Then, when he is sleepy, you will be able to start cleaning him."

Miss Firkin shuddered. As he was going out Belvedere Tipp hesitated.

"If you should find your task a little—er—exhausting, Miss Firkin, a late arrival in the morning would be excusable."

Next morning, however, Miss Firkin was at the office before her chief. Obviously a deeply stirred woman, when he arrived she followed him into his room.

"Well," inquired Belvedere Tipp, once more his ponderous, urbane self, "and how is your little patient?"

Miss Firkin clasped her hands in front of her and took a firm stand.

"Mr. Tipp," she said. "It is a most unpleasant animal, with disgusting habits."

"Dear me, Miss Firkin! How very regrettable. And have you—er—restored him to his normal colour?"

"He is patchy, Mr. Tipp. Very patchy. It must have been very strong paint."

"Indeed? Then we must persevere, Miss Firkin. I will tell his owners that it may take a day or two longer to cure him. . . ."

"Excuse me, Mr. Tipp!" Miss Firkin controlled herself with difficulty. "I have always carried out your instructions faithfully and to the letter, but this time I cannot do so. I refuse to spend another night with that animal."

Belvedere Tipp regarded her with mild surprise. Miss Firkin's lips were set in a thin line.

"Very well, Miss Firkin. Kindly hand me my alpaca dust jacket from the cupboard. If you will be good enough to accompany me to your flat, I will clean the animal myself."

Before leaving, he telephoned Mrs. Ressler.

"The little fellow is responding well to treatment," he purred. "I have great hopes of his complete recovery. It may be possible for you to see him to-day. I will telephone you again after lunch."

The morning was one that was likely to remain long in Benbow's memory, but after a couple of hours' hectic dodging, chasing and scrubbing, the last trace of green paint was removed.

"We must get rid of this smell of turpentine," mused Belvedere Tipp.

Miss Firkin tentatively produced a scent spray.

"Excellent, Miss Firkin! Just get hold of him, will you, while I spray!"

"No, Mr. Tipp," said Miss Firkin firmly. "You hold him while *I* spray!"

Benbow endured the last stage of his cure with even less fortitude than he had displayed before.

Belvedere Tipp waved aside the Coronation coat that Miss Firkin was gingerly offering.

"Better let him dry," he said, "while I telephone."

Mrs. Ressler's delight at learning of Benbow's imminent return was as hysterical as her sorrow had been the day before.

"Oh, Mr. Tipp," she babbled. "How can we ever repay you? You wonderful, *wonderful* man! And you're bringing my 'ickle Benbow back to his grandmuzzer yourself! I'll 'phone my husband right away . . . and Clarence. . . . Oh, Mr. Tipp, what can I say. . . ."

Belvedere Tipp hung up the receiver with a sigh.

"Put his coat on," he said.

"*You* put his coat on, Mr. Tipp," said Miss Firkin. "I had better return to the office."

No returning heroes could have received a greater reception than that which awaited Belvedere Tipp and Benbow. Mrs. Ressler, Marjorie, and Mr. Ressler fell upon Benbow in a combined embrace, while Clarence wrung Belvedere Tipp warmly by the hand. Escaping from the scrum, Benbow leapt lightly about the room, crashing three ornaments, upsetting a bowl of goldfish, and finally coming to rest in the interior of the grand piano.

"How glad he is to be home," observed Belvedere Tipp.

Mr. Ressler advanced with outstretched hand.

"We have incurred a debt to you, Mr. Tipp, that we can never repay."

"You can repay me best, sir," said Belvedere Tipp solemnly, "by never allowing the little fellow to run into danger again. Once a monkey has suffered from Simian Chameleonosis he is always susceptible to the disease. The least little thing may bring it on. The least fretting might prove fatal—for instance, sir, if ever you were to try to separate him from this house, which he so obviously loves. . . ."

"Oh, Mr. Tipp!" cried Marjorie, "you can't mean that!"

Belvedere Tipp glanced quickly at Clarence.

"But, Mr. Tipp!" expostulated Clarence, promptly, "we were going to have him when we were married. . . ."

Belvedere Tipp held up his hands in horror.

"My dear sir!" he cried. "That would be absolutely fatal. The little fellow wouldn't live a day!"

Mrs. Ressler put her arms around her daughter, not without a certain satisfaction.

"Mr. Tipp knows best, my dear," she soothed. "We daren't take the risk. After all, you can come and see him every day. . . ."

"Twice a day, if you like," volunteered Clarence generously.

"We all have to face these things," urged Mr. Ressler.

"All right," agreed Marjorie, tearfully. "Ooooh! *Do* look at him!"

Benbow, having emerged from his hiding place, was happily engaged in tearing the curtain to ribbons. Clarence gently led Belvedere Tipp from the room and produced his cheque book.

It was several months before Belvedere Tipp saw his young client again. It was in the respectable saloon bar which the head of Delicate Missions, Limited visited, in moments of relaxation, that they met. Clarence Byflow was paler and his hair was thinner. He ordered their drinks with the air of a man shouldering a great burden.

"I trust, sir," said Belvedere Tipp, "that the married state is proving partial to you? A happy home, sir, is worth more than all the jewels of Asia! My best respects, sir!"

Clarence groaned. "Happy home!" he echoed, hollowly.

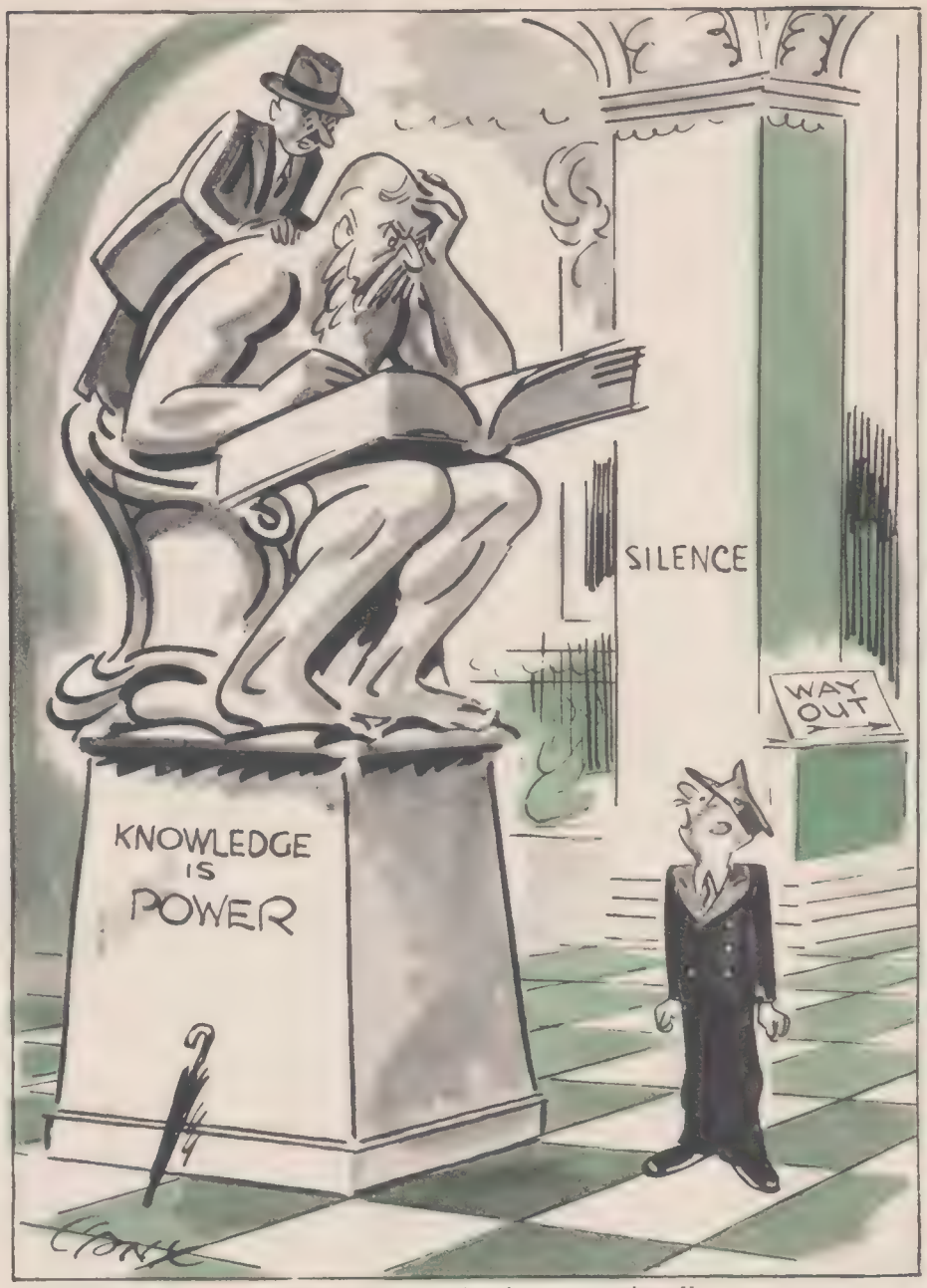
Belvedere Tipp looked pained.

"My dear sir! I trust nothing is amiss? If I remember rightly, the little matter of the monkey was most satisfactorily settled!"

"Settled!" Clarence drained his glass and banged it on the counter. "My goodness, Tipp! Do you know what she did when she found she couldn't have Benbow?" He leaned weakly against the bar and his voice sank to a bloodless whisper. "She bought three parrots and a goat!"

Laugh

The "PASSING SHOW



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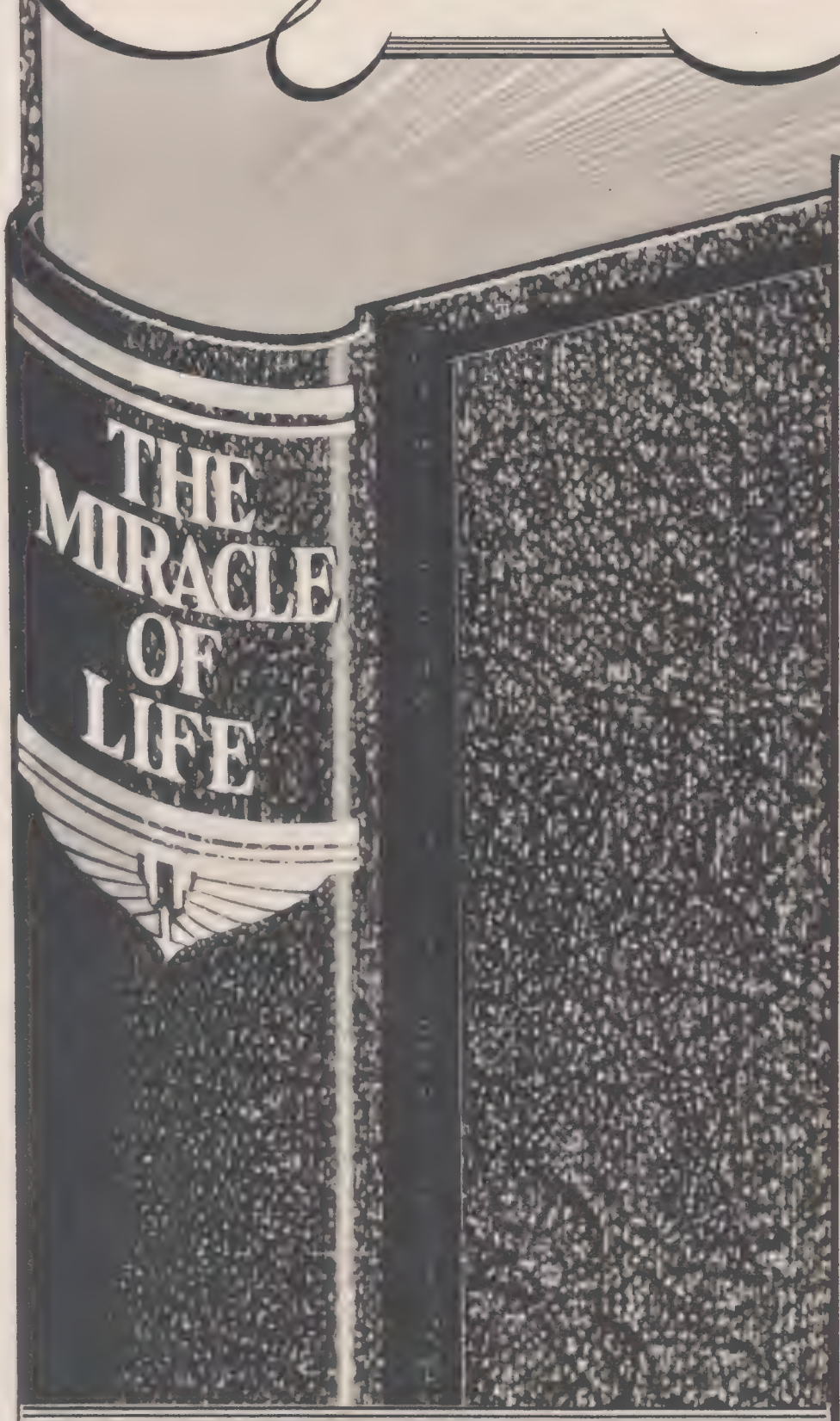

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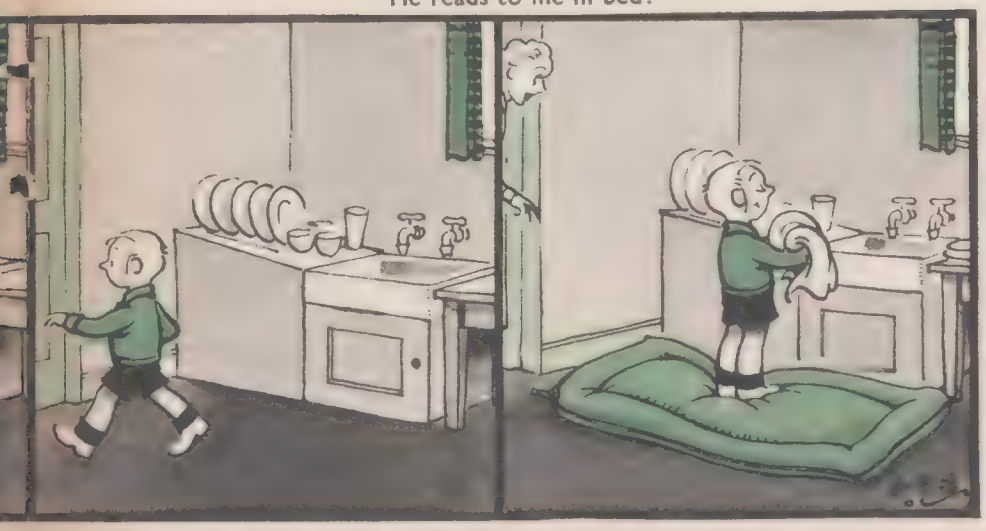


" My husband wants another tin of paint to match these stains! "

WEDDING GOWN MURDER

Continued from page 8

a nearer view; his hard cheeks closely shaven, fine sharp lines around his eyes. Lieutenant Mohrn behind them saying something about warmth and a fire and nodding pleasantly to Susan. "Here's your chair, Cousin," said Royal Brigle. "I'll pull it up to the fire."

"Thank you, Royal."

"Warmer in here." That was Cary Cavendish. They were obviously keeping themselves and their distress under close and decent control. And it was as obviously difficult. Lieutenant Mohrn said kindly: "Just a few more questions—then I'll let you rest again for a while." He glanced at Susan and Jim, nodded very briefly in a way that meant, stay here if you want to, and turned to Royal Brigle.

"Can you remember just what you were doing while Mrs. Cavendish was upstairs?"

"Why—yes, I think so. Yes." He was leaning with what struck Susan as elaborate ease against the mantel. A small green-shaded table lamp was the only light in the room and above the bright pool it spread upon the table there was a band of shadow. The gas flames hissed and the boy's face looked pale and thin as he looked down at the wavering points of lights. "I was in the library most of the time. In fact, I believe all the time."

"Were you alone?" asked Lieutenant Mohrn very gently.

The boy stared down at the gas log and replied at once: "Mrs. Powner was there, too."

There was a little silence. Mrs. Powner did not move, except to crumple a wet handkerchief very slowly in her large white hand. Her eyes were brimming with tears.

"I see," said Lieutenant Mohrn. "Mrs. Powner?"

"You—you mean you want me to confirm it? Of course, I was there, too, Lieutenant. I would have known it if Royal had left the room. He was—he was there all the time."

A lie? Or the simple truth? Susan realised again that there is no possible distinction to the ear. A wavering truth sounds like a lie. A bold lie sounds true. It was possible that owing to the circumstances of Royal's upbringing the two were devoted to each other as a mother and son might be. It was equally possible that they were not. And in this case the determining factor might be simple common sense; a realisation that, no matter what their relation might be, they could save themselves by swearing to an alibi. No possible distinction to the ear. Three alibis. Three suspects. Always providing Sweetum and the girl were outside the reckoning.

A policeman appeared in the library doorway and made some imperceptible communication to Lieutenant Mohrn who murmured soothingly and vanished.

His departure left silence in its wake. Silence except for the soft little hiss of the gas log and Mrs. Powner's long, sighing breath. Presently Royal said, watching the gas: "The sale. We needn't go on with it now. We'll have to do something about that."

"Stop it?" asked Cary Cavendish, sharply.

There was another stillness which held only the whisper of the gas log. Then Royal said: "I suppose so. Delay it, at least, for a time. Until we know what we are going to do."

Mrs. Powner's white fingers clutched the damp handkerchief spasmodically.

"Cynthia wanted to sell," she said. "Her wishes——"

Royal did not look away from the fire. His long chin was rigid and his thin mouth tight.

"We'll delay the sale," he said.

"This—this needn't change things," said Cary Cavendish, uneasily. He ran his hand across his forehead and back over thinning grey hair. "You can live with me—just as we had planned. Cynthia——" his taut voice choked all at once and he turned and walked blindly away from them. "Cynthia—my God, I *can't* believe it."

Susan, knowing her presence an intrusion, moved very quietly across the little room and into the passage. She could feel their eyes upon her and suddenly aware of her. Jim followed her and closed the door and shut out with its dark panels the picture of that sombre little room with the three shadowy silent figures, linked by a mutual tragedy. And a mutual and hideous suspicion.

"Let's see the sales girl," said Jim and opened the door at the end of the little passage. They went across the dining-room again, through the large butler's pantry with its shining but old-fashioned fixtures and into a vast kitchen beyond it—a kitchen with enormous stoves and shelves and great white tables. And amazing disorder, with heaps of kitchen utensils stacked here and there—a litter of papers—empty bottles—all the accumulation of kitchen shelves over a period of years.

On the end of a long table were the remains of somebody's lunch; a loaf of bread—cold meats on a plate. Beside it sat the girl, huddled under a sweater and crying.

And she kept on crying. Partly from fright; partly, Susan guessed, from chill. And she knew nothing at all of the murder. Nobody had gone up the stairs. There was the door (she pointed to a closed door near by, which, opened, disclosed a small entry with no other door or window and a straight flight of stairs,) and she was working at the cupboards beside it trying to bring a miscellaneous array of grocery supplies to order.

"All them spices and things to sort out. Even groceries. Mrs. Cavendish wanted everything that was good put into a box to take home." She sobbed.

"Did you see Mrs. Cavendish when she came?" asked Jim.

"Yes. She brought some things to the dining-room and came in here and spoke to me."

"What did she say?"

"Oh, she just talked a while. She always talked a lot. Showed me some of the things she had brought to be included in the sale. Junk for the most part," said Miss Michelle, with simple scorn. "I don't know why she expected anybody to buy them. Then she looked in the cupboards and told me not to throw out anything that could be used. And said—said I wasn't to take anything. As if I would!"

The door from the pantry creaked and swung open. It was Mr. Sweetum, hurried, worried, panting. And he had news.

"Blanche," he cried. "The gold dressing set! It's gone." He turned to Jim and wrung his sensitive small hands. "Solid gold it was. Set with amethysts. A mirror, two boxes, filagreed bottles."

"Worth how much?" said Jim.

Mr. Sweetum's volubility ceased. He shrugged and looked mournful.

"Worth maybe five hundred dollars."

"How much could you get for it?"

He shrugged again. "That's something else," said Mr. Sweetum. "But the whole set is gone. It was laid out on the dining-room table along with the crystal wines."

"On the dining-room table," said Susan. "Are you sure?"

He was sure. He appealed to Blanche who was also sure. They had talked of it that very afternoon, had placed it advantageously among the other objects on that table. Mr. Sweetum hurried away to tell the police.

"It's a thief," he cried. "A thief. This proves it." And Miss Michelle, probably to corroborate, hurried along with him.

Susan and Jim, left alone in the heterogeneously heaped kitchen, exchanged a look.

"Guess that settles it," said Jim. "Now, then—which one was it?"

"A gold dressing set couldn't possibly dissolve," suggested Susan.

"That's right, too. I'll try this floor first, then the basement. May take some time."

At the door he paused and turned to Susan again. "Now look here, Susie. Don't go poking into things while I'm gone. After all—the murderer is very much with us."

The door swung slowly to behind him. His warning had been terse, forceful—true. The murderer was in the house—

(*please turn to page* 26)

A MAN IN THE WRONG

By A. C. BARRETT

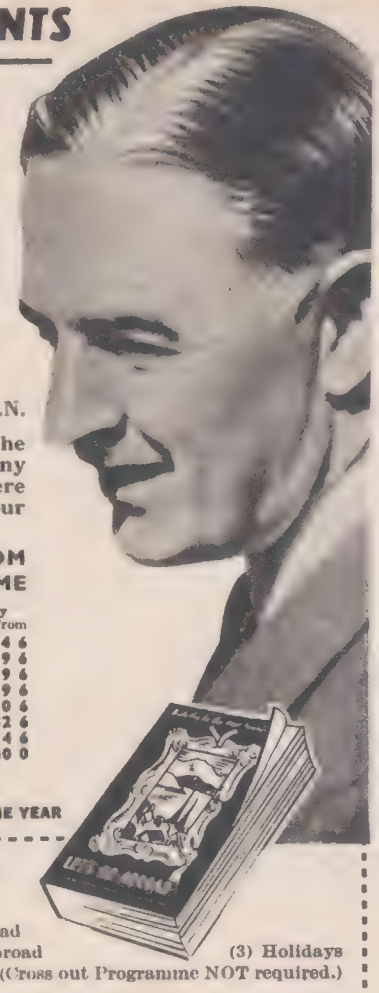
GREAT EXTENSION OF POLYTECHNIC HOLIDAY ARRANGEMENTS

FOR 1938 YOUR JUBILEE YEAR— MY PROGRAMME

Exciting new plans for holidays abroad

OFFERS YOU

says Commander R. G. STUDD, D.S.O., R.N.



THIS is the Jubilee year of Polytechnic holidays and we are marking the occasion by embarking on a big policy of expansion and offering our many friends a wonderful programme that surpasses all that have gone before. There will be more trains, more hotels, more delightful places to visit and more of our friendly English holiday hosts to see that you have a jolly good time.

The holiday of your life

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What fun it is to plan the holiday of your dreams from the Polytechnic programme. Let us suppose you choose to go to the Polytechnic Chalets, Lucerne.

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NEW HAPPINESS EVERY DAY

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Prices for Swiss holidays are the lowest for 24 years! Around Lake Lucerne you now get a choice of enchanting centres, all linked by the lake steamer season ticket which we have arranged for you.

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World-famous Spas

In addition to all the old favourites (with which we are still including season tickets on the Rhine steamers) we have added new resident centres at the two world-famous spas, Wiesbaden and Bad Ems.

travel

New low-priced holidays in France include Rouen, the romantic old Normandy city; Tours in the charming Chateaux country, and exclusive Aix-les-Bains in the Savoy Alps.

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Notice that prices for complete 9-day holidays to Belgium are now from as low as £3 . 19 . 6. Again we have arranged for you a season ticket on the coastal tramways and exemption from bathing tax.

Prices are really inclusive

Each of our prices includes everything to ensure a complete, comfortable holiday—return fares by land and sea, reserved seats on trains, good hotel accommodation with three meals a day, the friendly help of our English staff while travelling and of our resident hosts at the centres. Tips, too, are included. Many prices also include special facilities to help you enjoy your holiday to the full.

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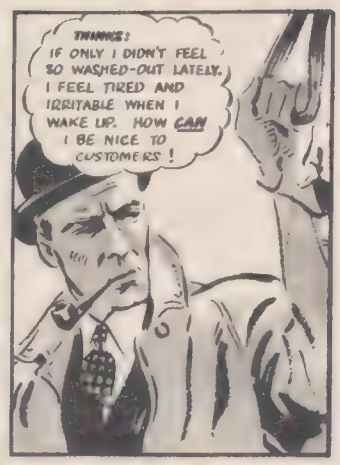
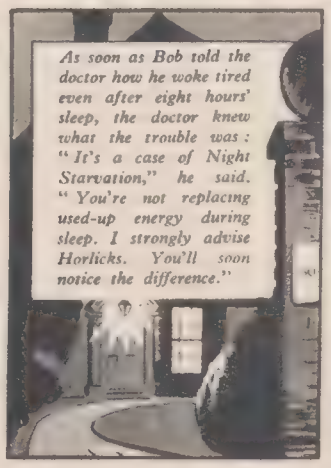
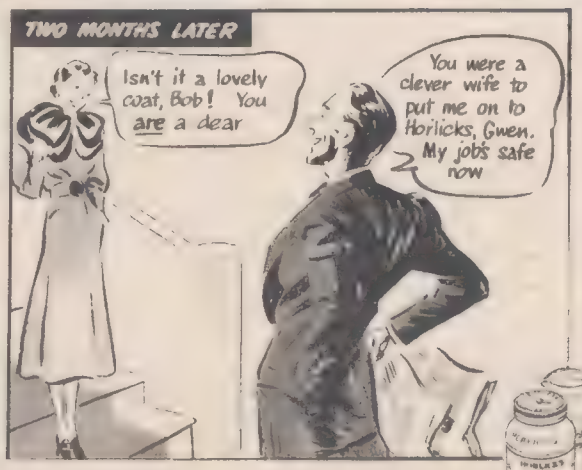


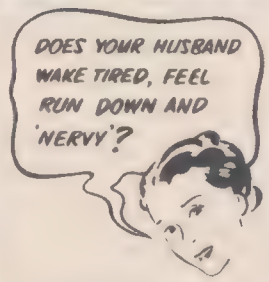
★

That evening Mrs. Thomas said: "I know what you go through, Bob . . . Promise you'll see a doctor — honestly, it's your health that's wrong."

★







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NINETY-FOUR VARIETIES

New Breeds Among Proud Beauties at Cruft's

NINETY-FOUR different breeds of dogs have been entered for Cruft's Dog Show, which opens at the Royal Agricultural Hall, Islington, London, N., next week. See how many of them you can name and then add Tibetan spaniels and mastiffs and terriers, Bernese mountain dogs, boxers, basenjis, chihuahuas, Boston terriers and Lhassa apsos and you'll see what happens when a man goes to the dogs with a vengeance.

Probably the most interesting of the proud beauties at the show will be the Doberman pinschers, German dogs that are in danger of becoming extinct. Fine looking dogs with the clean, beautiful lines of great danes, they have the cheetah-like speed and power of deerhounds.

Always the popular dogs of the show, cocker spaniels have been entered in such great numbers this year that for the first time two judges will be needed to cope with them.

When you have tired of watching the judging of so many lovely specimens of canine aristocracy, you can wander around the pens trying to pick the most noble creature of them all.

But you'll always come back to the conclusion that the dog you left behind at home is the best of the lot. Don't forget that he too can come up to championship rank, if not in looks at least in fitness, as long as you give him his weekly dose of Benbow's, the dog mixture that keeps eyes bright and coats glossy and so tones up the dog's condition that he can laugh at all troublesome disorders.

Call at the Benbow's stand at Cruft's show and learn how the big dog breeders value this excellent mixture. For even the Upper Ten of the Dog World have their Benbow's regularly.

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Since 1887, Crufts Dog Show has brought together thousands of dogs of all breeds.

FROM 1/6 PER BOTTLE

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NO DOG OWNER SHOULD BE WITHOUT 'BENBOW'

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must be in the house—and there were a hundred hiding places. The kitchen was gloomy in its confusion and disorder; gloomy and cold and desolate. Susan, in her slim black with her smart little black hat perched at the right angle on her brown hair and her bright yellow orchids against suave silver fox, looked oddly incongruous against that background. It was very still. Upstairs—Susan hesitated, then knew what that curious, intuitive little voice had been urging her to do. Upstairs. And the door leading upon a stairway just beside her.

The treads were old and creaked like the echo of a footstep. Susan's suede slippers made little taps of sound and her skirt rustled softly between the walls. The stairway turned half-way up, but there was no one to be seen. And there was no one in the wide long passage upon which, presently, she emerged. No one in great, massively furnished bedrooms which opened from it. Bathrooms like banqueting halls, dressing-rooms lined with mirrors; the Brigles had lived with much luxury and little taste.

Towards the front of the long passage she met again the friendly policeman who gave her another speculative, knowing look and said, cheerfully and very decisively, that she could view the scene of the crime if she so desired. So very decisive and cheerful was he indeed, that Susan who violently did not so desire, found herself being led into the great corner room that had belonged to Judge Brigle.

She emerged somewhat hurriedly and sat down on the top step.

It was not at all pleasant.

It was, in fact, rather bad.

And covering it with a yellow satin counterpane didn't help much because there were outlines below the counterpane.

Theoretically and fictionally Susan wrote quite blithely and blandly of murder and of the detection of crime. In actual fact, she decided rather resentfully, it was an altogether different affair. And yet, if one could lock up one's emotions, there were at the same time the strangest likenesses.

"Would you like some brandy, Miss Dare?" It was the policeman again, and she became aware of his hovering, anxious presence above her. "I—I didn't realise it would be—I mean I thought you was sort of used to—well, to bodies, so to speak. How about some brandy?"

Susan pulled herself together. Not being used to either bodies or brandy the combination, she was sure, would be disastrous in the extreme.

She didn't say so, however, and finding that her knees were again inclined to support her she withdrew in good order. And was grateful for that hovering blue presence which interposed a kind of barrier between her and the thing that lay on the great black bed in the judge's room.

Downstairs there was a subdued hum of voices and movement. In the little gas-warmed room at the back were those three figures silhouetted blackly against the flickering points of blue and red light. Somewhere below, too, Jim was looking for evidence leading to the murderer. Susan, who had her feline moments, began systematically to prowl.

Murder had been done in that house; somewhere in the place there must be clues to the murderer.

More bedrooms, more bathrooms. A bisecting corridor which she explored. A wicker furnished sunroom. She was at the back of the house again, turning on lights as she went. A door like a dark panel set into the wall. She opened it. Beyond was black space and the musty dank smell of old cellars. A clothes chute or the forgotten well of a dumb waiter leading probably straight to the basement, with an opening also on the first floor. Her eyes became accustomed to the blackness. It was a huge affair—large enough easily to permit the passage of a body. Always providing there was a ladder—or a knotted rope, for if it had been used for a dumb waiter the ropes were gone.

Neither Royal nor Cary Cavendish looked exactly athletic but a man need not be athletic to make such an ascent. Was there any possible way to climb to the second floor from the basement or first floor? Susan put a groping hand into that blackness and found it. Boards nailed along the studding made a rough ladder. She withdrew her hand. There was, then, a ready means of entrance to and exit from the second floor. A ready means of communication within the house and without using either stairway or elevator. And if Cary Cavendish knew of any entrance into the basement, then his arrival after the murder did not in any way establish his innocence. Unless, of course, his secretary had finally been found and had given him an alibi.

One thing at any rate was certain, either Cary Cavendish or Royal Brigle—or even Mr. Sweetum and the girl, Blanche Michelle—could have climbed up that ladder, murdered Cynthia and gone down again the same way and no one the wiser. Mrs. Powner, of course, presented a difficulty. Susan had an instant's vision of that lady's decorous black bulk surging up the narrow ladder. It was grotesque. Too grotesque. Susan closed the door to the clothes chute rather definitely and reminded herself that commonsense had its values.

The long bisecting passage ended in an open arched doorway. Susan's cautious, groping hand found the electric button and immediately there were lights shining in great crystal chandeliers and revealing an enormous expanse of gloomily bare and shining floors, with a huge Steinway piano at one end. The ballroom, of course. Gilt chairs lined the walls and there were now long tables heaped with articles for sale.

Susan looked, paused unbelievingly and then, led by a kind of fascinated astonishment, approached the tables.

It was a paradise for old-clothes men.

All the litter of a forty-year-old household was in that room. Clothes, broken lamps, cushions, curtains, automobile tyres. Here were canes, ten or twelve of them, none worth taking home. There an old opera hat with the spring broken. Hadn't they ever disposed of anything? Had they kept every stitch of clothing that came into the house? Umbrellas. A banana plant. A khaki overseas cap. A china doll. Did they expect actually to sell all that? Had someone—Cynthia?—raked the garrets and old trunks.

Susan paused at a stack of dusty old music. Czerney's Exercises. She opened the yellow book and remembered: tum—tum—TUM—tum—tum. The windows were bare of curtains up here, and the rain slanted blackly down upon them and in that glittering blackness Susan's small figure was reflected a hundred times.

Music. And there were more clothes. Dresses—evening dresses for the most part—yellowed satins—wrinkled velvets—red and purple and white and black, all heaped together. And laces.

Irresistibly her fingers sought through the heaps and extracted a gown of lace—wrinkled and faintly ivory and made with curious flounces and loops, yet so delicate, so gossamer thin, so intricately and so beautifully shaded that Susan, who knew a little of laces, gasped with incredulous delight.

It was, too, a regretful delight.

This lace should have made family treasure. She lingered over it, perplexed by its incongruity and by something oddly bridal about the gown. The lace, of course—that was bridal; and so were the circles of satin roses. It had been once an exquisite thing. Once—when, exactly?

She scanned the style and strove to identify it and partially succeeded, although the dress had certainly been made and worn before she, Susan, was born. White lace and white satin roses. She looked at the delicate ruching around the high neck, at the lace ruffles about very small sleeves. It had been worn very little. And the sleeves, too, were long. It was almost certainly a wedding-gown. What, then, was it doing tossed among umbrellas and old opera hats for a curious multitude to paw over? The lace itself might, if the buyer knew lace, bring in a few dollars. The gown had no value at all. Yet here it was in all that litter waiting to be sold to anyone who would buy.

She shook out the delicate folds and held the gown against her black suit and wondered who had worn it and what that crumpled little dress had known. A delicate fragrance rose lightly to Susan's small nose. She sniffed, sniffed again and identified it.

Lavender.

The scent of lavender emanating from those frothy folds of lace.

She was right, then. It might not be a wedding-gown precisely, although it looked like it, but it was certainly a gown of some special sentimental significance. Special enough for someone, sometime, to fold away its delicacy in lavender. And now it was tossed out on the table for sale for the few dollars it might bring.

She looked down at the lace flounces and for a moment forgot herself in admiring the beauty and delicate grace of the shading. Forgot herself, forgot the slanting rain against the glittering black window panes; forgot her distance from the others in the great dark house, forgot what had brought her into that house. And forgot what had been done in that sombre twilight and forgot to listen.

It was for only a moment but it was long enough.

She touched the flounces lightly with her finger-tips, stripping off her black glove in order to satisfy her sense of touch. It was not Rose Point but it was almost as lovely. As lovely—there was something damp upon those laces. Something damp and cold. Her exploring hand went back to find the spot it had encountered and she turned automatically to the nearest light.

Her first thought was that water had been, somehow, spilled on the lace gown. Then she held it directly under a light. It was a patch of dampness, barely darker than the ivory tones of lace. But there was also a kind of powder sifting through it. She could feel it with her fingertips. A very soft, fine; white powder that was not perfumed and was definitely not a cosmetic and yet was strikingly fine and clogging in texture. Quite suddenly Susan recognised it. And at the same instant some faint and far-away memory stirred.

She looked at the lace and at that spot of powdered dampness.

And she knew who had murdered Cynthia Cavendish. It was not proved, could not be proved until she had asked certain questions, and perhaps not then. But she knew, now, where to seek conclusive evidence.

With convincing clearness and reason the pieces of the puzzle fell into place. She must inquire; she must confirm the solution. But from that instant Susan herself was sure.

NEXT WEEK;
Menace in The Shadows

Solving the Riddle of Life!

IN the centre pages of this issue THE PASSING SHOW announces a thrilling presentation, "THE MIRACLE OF LIFE," a 200,000-word work that will hold you spellbound with wonder. You will follow with amazement the story of the secrets of life and nature through nearly 500 pages of intense scientific interest.

You will learn of the marvellous workings of Nature as a doctor, Nature as an architect, Nature as the primeval force of Creation, still only dimly understood.

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Supplies of these volumes are limited, and because there will be such a big demand, all reservations must be dealt with in strict rotation. Turn instantly to page 21 and send in your Reservation Forms to-day.

THE BEST OF GOOD NEWS
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CATARRH & Noises in the Head.
Physician Makes Discovery of Fundamental Importance—whereby Catarrh is INSTANTLY RELIEVED & QUICKLY ERADICATED

NO more Choking, Coughing, Sniffing and Gasping for Breath! No longer need anyone suffer the annoyance and humiliation of Nose Stoppages, Excessive Mucus and Phlegm, Head Noises, Deafness and Bronchial Asthma—nor the dangerous Self-Poisoning of Catarrhal Indigestion and Constipation!

The newest medical knowledge reveals how the Catarrhal Condition can be eradicated completely from the entire system, and shows why any kind of treatment which merely attacks symptoms is always futile.

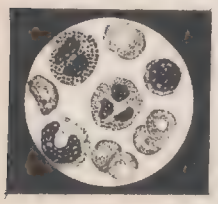
If you have Catarrh of the Nose, or Throat, or Stomach—then you may be sure that the same condition extends right through your system. Germs are at work, and their poisons get into your blood and circulate everywhere.

Every sufferer knows that the nose and throat can be quickly and easily cleared with gargles, sprays and inhalants—but the trouble usually returns. You may clear the surface, but the infection, being in the blood, cannot be got rid of so easily.

An eminent physician, who fully realised the true facts about Catarrh, set himself the task of finding a remedy that would banish as well as relieve—by destroying All the Catarrh germs whilst cleansing the blood of their poisons.

After extensive research work, over a number of years, he succeeded in producing a new bactericide—deadly to the Catarrh germ but non-poisonous, colourless, non-staining, and pleasant to use. It clears nose and throat "like magic," and it also passes into the blood-stream, and so hunts down the germs, no matter where they lurk—something entirely new in the treatment of this disease.

To complete the good work, he perfected two wonderful prescriptions for internal use—one which cleanses all the Catarrh-germ poisons from the blood and another which puts the natural defence forces of the body into first-class "fighting trim" against re-infection. Thanks to these discoveries—now combined in one three-fold treatment—thousands of chronic sufferers have got rid of their Catarrh, Bronchial Asthma, Head Noises, and all Allied Complaints COMPLETELY AND PERMANENTLY.



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Much wanted firebrand would have to be a magician if he were to perform essential vanishing trick once the police babu was on his trail

BY LESLIE BERESFORD

ILLUSTRATED BY ALFRED SINDALL

MUNSHIR KHAN, chief-inspector of police in the Derabagh district, thrust through the seethe of people, which at this hour of sundown was at its flood. These fell away from his stalwart uniformed figure, striding along with a ferocity instinctive to a man with the face of a warrior, the bristling beard and moustaches of the Peshwari. To many, he was frightening.

Some, however, feared nothing from him. Indeed, with the secrecy of cowards, they threatened him. Even now, a few minutes since, evidence of this had reached him. Only a yard or two away, in the open space before the Mosque, while answering the call to prayer with others of the faithful, the thing had happened. In the jostling crowd something had been pushed into his hand, left in his fingers while he stared blankly around for the vanished giver.

It was the second time in as many days that he had so been robbed of his dignity. He had known, even before looking, what his fingers held. A piece of coarse, yellowish paper, on which Arabic words were scrawled in a purplish ink; few, but trenchant in meaning. He read them afresh now:

"Beware. In the name of Allah, All-Highest and All-merciful. Let he who is lost, remain lost, for he shall not be betrayed into the unclean hands of the unbelievers. Be blind and deaf, lest the wrath of the faithful fall upon thee."

The Khan thrust the yellow threat into a capacious pocket of his uniformed coat. Partly because it seemed to him so best put out of sight and mind, as that to which he must pay no heed. Partly, also, because at this moment he was greeted by a piping voice, the very sound of which caused his beard and moustaches to bristle more than ever, while also the baffled anger within him almost passed mastery.

"Greeting, inspectorjee!" shrilled the voice, which he recognised as belonging to Ramchandra Dass, chief clerk in police-headquarters and a veritable thorn in his side.

The Khan was obliged to call a halt to his stride, swinging round, doing his utmost to appear friendly in face and manner, if never in heart. For he and Ramchandra, apart from the service to which both were mutually loyal, were separate as the poles, and with no hope or intent of ever being other than at enmity. The Khan had not this day come in contact with the little babu, having been too busily concerned elsewhere. He had no desire to meet him now, though forced to do so.

Ramchandra, surrounded by friends and relatives, to say nothing of an immense mass of indiscriminate personal and domestic luggage, stood by a large motor-coach, which had been hired to carry him and his party to Gharwalpur, a city not very distant, as the Khan knew. Indeed, it had been with great relief that the latter had learnt from Captain Delaunay sahib, police-chief, of Ramchandra's projected absence on leave for a few days, so as to attend the wedding festivities of a young relative.

"It rejoices me greatly to see you before I depart on joyous connubial celebrations, inspectorjee!" the little babu addressed him now, drawing apart from the chattering crowd. "Despite great pleasure in matters of Cupid, I am also perturbed in spirit lest during my absence on leave, matters of law and order might become out of joint."

"Have no fear as to that, babu," the Khan retorted, with prompt sarcasm, inwardly furious over the little babu's smug air of self-importance. "Are you indeed thinking that, because babu Ramchandra Dass is sleeping, sun is not rising and setting without his permission?"

"All the same, inspectorjee, this matter——" the little babu spoke in undertones of confidence, glancing over his shoulder in obvious fear of eavesdroppers before continuing:

"This matter of nefarious individual, Mohammed Haj, now performing almighty vanishing caboodle——"

"Get you away on your holiday, babu, and forget all about Mohammed Haj!" the Moslem interrupted that detested voice with a cold anger. "The matter is best left in my hands and those of Captain Delaunay sahib. When you come back, you will learn that the Haj has been found, his hiding-place being exchanged for a cell in the gaol."

"I am wishing you indeed a great luck, inspectorjee!" Ramchandra beamed, then became serious: "All the same, vanishing caboodle is already very smart piece of work, despite great searchings of police. However—perhaps you have to-day had some small success?"

"That is my affair, babu, as I said before!" responded the Khan, tersely, and the other shrugged, his rotating jaws ceaselessly chewing the betel-nut.

"So it is, inspectorjee," he said. "Nevertheless, use of grey matter is much in request. Finding is not affair of charging like bull in china-shop. Pride is sometimes preceding collapse of Humpty-Dumpty, vide poet Shakespeare——"

"See, babu, your driver is ready for you! Do not keep the coach and your friends waiting, while talking on useless matters!" the inspector advised him curtly, indicating in a gesture that the situation was as he had said.

The little babu, seeing this was so, waddled off in a great hurry, being helped to mount into the coach with much chatter and fuss. There, seated eventually, he beamed down upon the Khan, calling out a last cheery warning:

"Please to remember historic upset of Humpty-Dumpty, inspectorjee! Kindly look before precipitating on high-jump!"

As the motor-coach departed in a trail of dust, the Khan spat in its wake. His Moslem mind revolted against this betel-chewing babu, this pestiferous pen-pusher with whom he had so ceaselessly been at war since appointed as chief-inspector at Derabagh. The trouble about the war was that so far Ramchandra had come out heavily on the winning side, despite all his own accepted smartness as a police sleuth.

For once in a way, with the babu happily absent on leave, the Khan had been looking forward to handling a particularly important matter entirely on his own account, and without the unnecessary interference of Ramchandra. Now, especially since the latter had seen fit to poke his nose into the affair, the Khan was the more determined to justify himself.

The matter concerned a certain Mohammed Haj. This gentleman, a notorious firebrand and regarded by some Moslems as in the nature of a "holy man," had till recently been living in the nearby native state of Paridkhot. Here he had ill-repaid the hospitality afforded him, by plotting to assassinate the Hindu Maharajah and, by revolution to restore an ancient Moslem kingdom.

The mad plot failing, Mohammed Haj had been neatly spirited away out of Paridkhot State by his friends, seeking the greater safety of British India, and the Derabagh district. However, as Mohammed and his friends should have foreseen,

"It rejoices me greatly to see you before I depart on joyous connubial celebrations, Inspectorjee

it was at once incumbent on the Derabagh police to rout him out of his hiding-place here, wherever it might be, handing him back to the Paridkhot State officials for trial and inevitable punishment.

The finding of that hiding-place had so far been the difficulty. At least, the Khan was now entirely assured, it was definitely not to be found in Derabagh city, as at first had seemed certain. For this evening he and his police had completed so systematic and well-organised a search of that area, as not even to have left a needle undiscovered in a bundle of hay.

And, of course, he had meantime so organised matters that every road out of Derabagh district had been watched, so that nobody could have left it that way by car, native vehicle, on bicycle or on foot, though indeed they might easily have done so apart from the roads. Actually more than once, the Khan had been tempted to hope that this disturbing co-religionist of his had found his way to another district, where other police would attend to him.

On the other hand, after receipt of these two mysterious and threatening missives, he had steeled his back and stiffened his inborn professional pride, desirous only to lay his hands on this elusive scoundrel and so gain official merit. The betel-chewed gibes of Ramchandra Dass, departing on his wedding celebrations, had only served to increase the Khan's determination to come out top-dog in this affair, for once in a way.

And this, as darkness began to descend on that noisy rabbit-warren of Derabagh, led him by equal determination to a house in a narrow streetlet, so well known to him as for him to find his way there blindfolded. Not that the streetlet had ever, so far, been fortunate for him. He doubted if it would prove so now. He meant, however, to attempt its possibilities on lines to which his subtly-working mind had been inspired as Ramchandra was driven off, leaving his absurd gibes behind him.

"So it is you, oh king of cheetahs!" laughed, with a silken huskiness, the voice of that lovely Hindu dancing-girl, Ahari, who crouched on the cushioned floor of an upstairs room, lit only by a wick floating in a bowl of oil. "How goes the hunting, inspectorjee?"

"So well that I am come to thee, oh flower of flowers!" the Khan answered with an ingratiating softness as he seated himself.

"And why—to me?" she laughed, shrugging. "I have heard no sound of the hunt, or the unleashing of the cheetah—"

"But, of the prey you have heard," he insisted, softly; "of a certain Mohammed Haj, who is being hunted and remains hidden from sight."

"How indeed should I have heard anything of this Mohammed Haj?" she questioned, in such seeming wide-eyed innocence as made the Khan tremble for the outcome of his plans.

"How indeed can I answer that?" he questioned, warily, in return, adding: "All the same, pretty one, the secrets of men—Moslem as well as Hindu—come often to those small ears of thine. As also in this case. Otherwise——" and now he shot his bolt at a venture, after an instant of deliberate hesitation.

"—otherwise, why should Ramchandra Dass, before leaving for Gharwalpur, but a half-hour since, have bidden me come to seek thy advice as to the man's whereabouts?" he suggested, and remained waiting breathlessly.

It was a bold move and one which he disliked taking, being an honest man. He knew—it had indeed been proved time and again—that this dancing-girl held in her lovely little head the secrets of many men, come to her from the lips of lovers, or one way and another. Time and again she had proved the gold-mine from which that pestiferous little Ramchandra Dass had extracted the veins of some criminal enterprise, always to his own advantage, never to that of the Khan.

Time and again also the Khan had sought to win her confidence for himself, but in vain. Hence now his pretence that Ramchandra had sent him to her, seeking in that way to obtain a glimpse of her knowledge. Had she such knowledge as he so badly needed at this moment? If she had, would she be so imposed upon as to believe Ramchandra had sent him, and so unveil the truth for him?

As he asked himself these questions, waiting on her breath in a torture of anxiety, Ahari said:

"He must have changed his mind, inspectorjee. His words to me last night were that, should knowledge come my way, I should send a message to him at Gharwalpur. It was but an hour ago that the truth came to me—"

"And the truth?" urged the Khan, delighted.

"Is even at Gharwalpur, inspectorjee. It is there, in the Moslem college, that this Mohammed Haj stays, awaiting the moment to escape to the Baluchistan border."

The Khan gaped. He knew that college only too well. Indeed, not very long since, he had greatly obliged the principal there by arresting some thieves who had broken in, and restoring some considerable monies they had stolen from the place. If what the girl had said were true, he was therefore well in sight of journey's end, so far as Mohammed Haj was concerned.

Strange, all the same, that the man should be lying hidden so close to where Ramchandra was visiting, a fact of which Ahari suddenly reminded him.

"You will tell the babu the information I have given you, inspectorjee?" she asked, as if that were only natural, when he rose to depart, having thanked her quite honestly.

To that request, the Khan had given immediate promise, since it was only to be expected. But, though he naturally did not tell Ahari so, the promise was a qualified one. He had no intention of keeping it until after he had visited the college at Gharwalpur and effected Mohammed Haj's arrest.

To that he proceeded without loss of time. He spared only sufficient time to call at the bungalow of Captain Delaunay

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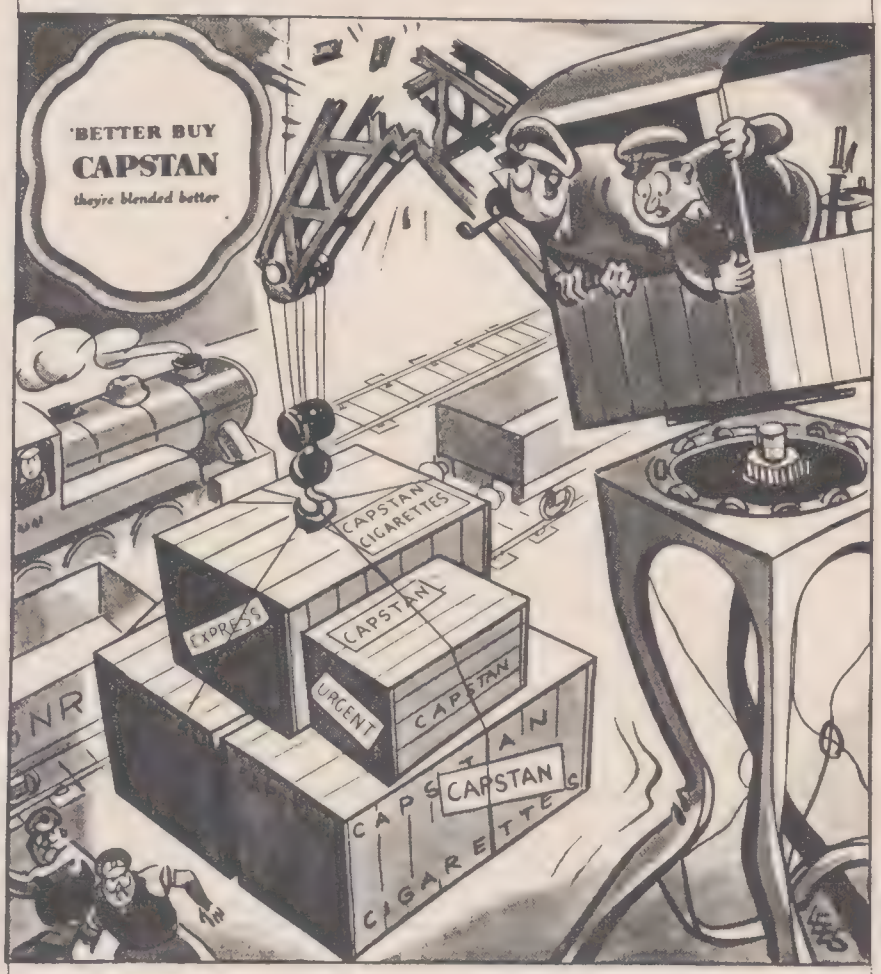

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sahib in cantonments, reporting the information he had just received, though without revealing the source of it.

"Let's hope your information is right, inspector," Delaunay sahib said, in his unemotional way. He was at the moment dressing for dinner at the Club, but had not kept the Khan waiting, realising the urgency of the matter. Indeed, he spoke of that now.

"This affair of Mohammed Haj has assumed such official importance, Khan, that we simply cannot allow him to slip out of our hands. It would be a permanent disgrace on our organisation, as no doubt you realise. You had better keep me informed—no. I don't think I'll risk that. It would be better if I go myself to Gharwalpur to-morrow so as to be on the spot.

"By the way," he added, as if on a sudden thought, "Ramchandra is there, isn't he? Might be as well to get in touch with him, Khan."

"With permission, huzoor, I can see no purpose in that." The Khan was inclined to strike a note of impatience, which was not lost on Delaunay sahib, only too well aware of the feud between his chief-inspector and the little babu.

"I only suggest it, Khan," he said, "because Ramchandra hinted to me before he left this evening, in point of fact, that one reason why he was taking leave to Gharwalpur lay in his belief that he would perhaps be killing two birds with one stone, suggesting that he had some knowledge as to this Mohammed Haj being in that neighbourhood."

That came as a shock to the Khan, especially after what Ahari had told him. In fact, as he motored through the dark to Gharwalpur, he decided that the little babu must have been bluffing. It was either that, or Ahari had been lying when she said Ramchandra was himself waiting for news.

In any case, the Khan told himself, Ahari had put in his hands the key to Mohammed Haj's arrest, and nothing else mattered. This time, the little babu would come in at the tail-end, instead of thrusting his impudent nose into the forefront of the affair, as so often had happened. At Gharwalpur police-thana, the Khan spent the night, casting out the net which next day was to haul in his much-wanted catch.

Morning, all the same, dawned only to dampen considerably that self-confidence with which it had begun. He was received by the principal of the Moslem college, a big building and considerable estate on the outskirts of the city. The aged professor, delighted to meet him again, and thanking him afresh for his earlier assistance in the matter of that dacoity, was frankly amazed, even hurt, when the Khan disclosed the purpose of his visit.

"Certainly you and your police shall immediately search every corner of the college!" he insisted at once, in the tone of a man deeply outraged. "You will find nothing, and no-one here, in proof of your accusation."

"Not accusation, learned one!" the Khan protested, hurt in turn. "I am here only because of certain information received."

"You shall prove at once how false it is!" the principal urged. "Go where you will in this building and in these grounds, let your men go likewise as they think fit. You will not find this Mohammed Haj here.

"I would ask you," he added, "to do this now. It happens that to-day, with us, is one of mourning. One of our moulvies, a holy man, has just died, and awaits burial. The professors and the students here are sad at heart, and are now awaiting the obsequies later in the day, when the body will be taken in procession to the Mosque."

This did not make any easier the somewhat brutal task of the Khan, who had, nevertheless, to make certain that he and his police were not being deceived. In his own mind, the Khan could not believe that any attempt was being made to that end. Amid signs of mourning, obvious all around, he and his men had complete freedom. Professors and students were paraded and very inch of the big place visited. The utmost frankness shown convinced the Khan by degrees that Ahari had either been deceived, or had deliberately deceived him.

In fact, when parting from the college principal with profuse apologies, the inspector was both humbled and angry. Humbled, because unquestionably he felt that his co-religionists regarded his intrusion as a desecration of their mourning for the dead. Angry, because he came away empty-handed, would have to confess as much to Delaunay sahib when he arrived and perhaps might find, after all, that Ramchandra and the dancing-girl had plotted together to make him look foolish, having the true whereabouts of Mohammed Haj up their sleeves all the while.

Opportunity to inquire into this matter at first hand was thrust upon him, as it chanced, when he had returned to Gharwalpur city after leaving the college. Ramchandra himself appeared in sight, garlanded with flowers and in gay mood, accompanied by a number of friends. The moment he caught sight of the Khan, he forsook these, crossing to the inspector and greeting him excitedly.

"Arrah, inspectorjee! You also are at my city? You have come here, I hope, making already arrest of Mohammed Haj?"

"You know, babu, that I have not!" the chagrined Khan retorted, without hesitation. "Doubtless also you knew that your dancing-girl friend, Ahari, has lied to me, telling me that Mohammed Haj was hidden in the Moslem college here?"

"She told you that?" Ramchandra questioned, eagerly.

The Khan did not hide either the negative result of his search there, or his bitterness because he had been led into believing the girl. Ramchandra, after listening, shrugged.

"All the same, if Ahari has been mistaken, it is matter of great surprise," he said, thoughtfully. "You are quite certain Mohammed Haj was not there?"

"Am I blind?" the Khan fumed. "Do I not know Mohammed Haj well enough by sight not to be mistaken, babu? Also, the principal is too honest a man to deceive me. He did not hesitate to show me round, so that I saw everyone and everything. Yes, even though one of the moulvies has died there and is being buried this afternoon, so that the college is in mourning——"

"Arrah. . . ." Ramchandra interrupted, quite sharply. "It is well, inspectorjee, that you speak of that. The body goes to the mosque and from there—it is said in the city—it will be taken to the rail-station, a train carrying it to some distant place for burial——"

"That I already know, babu," the Khan said, impatiently. "It has nothing to do with Mohammed Haj——"

"Maybe not!" Ramchandra bleated, soothingly. "I am mentioning matter because of law and order, inspectorjee. It seems that funeral of moulvie and joyful connubial processions of my relatives are making perambulation of city at simultaneous time, as per Greenwich Observatory. They are likewise meeting at about this spot.

"I fear, greatly, that religious strife may come about, inspectorjee," he added, in explanation. "I am asking you, would it not be as well to have many police stationed here, so that smitings and upheaval may be prevented, if occurring?"

"I shall, of course, see to that," the Khan shrugged, for indeed his inspector at the thana had mentioned the matter to him as having already been arranged, requiring that he should have as many men available as possible.

"All this," the Khan pursued the main matter, "is of no help as to the Haj, babu. Delaunay sahib told me that you believed the Haj to be somewhere here. He is most certainly not in the college——"

"Yet Ahari has said he must be there," Ramchandra piped, in his persistent way. "Never have I known her to be mistaken——"

"I tell you that she must be and I believe you know it, babu. You and she have joined together to try and fool me. I warn you, however, that this time I am not to be fooled. This time, you will see who shall come out of this best."

◆ ◆ ◆

With which he swung away. Nor was he altogether without such faith in himself as made that boast possible. Since visiting the college with such absence of result, there had come back to his mind something the inspector in the thana had chanced to mention to him during their conference, although at the time it had

not seemed of immediate importance to the Khan.

While talking with Ramchandra, however, he had been suddenly and vividly reminded of it by the sight of a man passing. A big man and a Moslem, but not a Moslem of whose acquaintance the Khan could feel proud. For this Abdul Aziz, although a man of wealth, was also—to the Khan's knowledge—a man of doubtful secret activities. Indeed, for some time past, the Khan had been having him watched, seeking to have him tripped up.

Meanwhile, thus linking him possibly with the whereabouts of the missing Mohammed Haj, the Khan did know that Abdul Aziz had lately been a great deal in Paridkhot State, doing some sort of mysterious business there. It was quite possible, he now thought, that Abdul Aziz might reasonably be suspected of being behind the Haj's disappearance. Much more so, it seemed, than was likely of the Moslem college authorities.

The Khan therefore followed in the wake of Abdul Aziz, very unobtrusively but with deliberation. That way he watched whom he met and with whom he talked; and again the strangely excited way he behaved. It was a long time before, covering a curiously circuitous route, Abdul Aziz eventually reached his home, a biggish place within high walls in the heart of the city.

There, as the Khan watched from a discreet distance, he saw that a large motor-car, its blinds drawn down, waited within the gates as if needing only the driver, to leave for some destination in prospect. It had evidently travelled hard and fast already and of late, for the body of it was white from the dust of roads. Certainly, from what the Gharwalpur inspector had told the Khan, the car had travelled here from Paridkhot State, having arrived here—with the blinds drawn down—in early morning hours following the very night when Mohammed Haj had been spirited from the same place.

This, the inspector had not thought fit earlier to report, had indeed only mentioned it casually to the Khan even now. But the latter, especially after having drawn a blank at the Moslem College, began to put two and two together, arguing that not only had Mohammed Haj been rushed here behind those drawn blinds, but also that the Haj was doubtless lying in hiding within the four walls of the house owned by Abdul Aziz.

A probability which, the Khan further argued, was doubtless in the mind, perhaps even in the certain knowledge, of Ramchandra Dass. And he, conspiring with Ahari, had tried to put him off the true scent by sending him to the Moslem College.

From that suspicion, amounting almost to a conviction, the Khan began to build a means to reach the truth quickly. He collected three of his policemen, who were on ordinary patrol duty and had them unobtrusively watch all ways in or out of the house, while he himself went back to the thana.

He had scarcely reached there, collecting a few men to make a raid on the place, when one of the policemen came in, breathless from running, to report that the car was being hurriedly made ready for departure. With some men, in the official car which had brought him from Derabagh, he raced back towards the house. At a bend not far from this, the other car creaked into view, travelling at speed towards the outskirts of the city.

The Khan, who chanced to know something about Gharwalpur and its lay-out, remembered a short-cut by which he might hope to cut off that other car, and took it. As he had anticipated, this brought him out at a juncture between two streets, along one of which the dust-whitened car of Abdul Aziz was racing fast. The race was cut abruptly short by severe braking, when the driver saw the Khan's police-car drawn up right across the fairway.

He did not, of course, dream that it was a police-car at first, beginning to pour out a stream of abuse in the vernacular. But this stopped as speedily as had the car, when suddenly the figures of the Khan and his uniformed men poured out on to the roadway. Simultaneously, one of its occupants stepped out on to the road, joining in both the abuse and surprise in a spirit of violent wrath.

"Now—may the curse of Allah be upon such sons of pigs!" he was declaiming, when he too began to gape and stare, the Khan's voice addressing him curtly.

"It is not a matter of Allah, to whom be offered all praise!" said the Khan, with a gesture of ritual, and added: "It is a matter of law and order, of examining who the passenger may be, with whom you are leaving Gharwalpur so swiftly and secretly, oh Abdul Aziz?"

"Passenger?" Abdul Aziz demanded in a white-hot fury, which even showed through the natural tan of his skin. "What do you mean, inspector? For long indeed I have known that you and your police seek to make trouble for me. And what passenger do you think I have in my car, that you stop me in this unlawful manner?

"Unlawful, it cannot be, oh Abdul Aziz," responded the Khan. "I am here to apprehend an escaping criminal, a certain Mohammed Haj. I have reason to believe that you brought him from Paridkhot State by night in this car a week ago. I believe that you are seeking now to get him away from here, knowing that we are hard after him——"

"It is a lie!"

There was something, however, about the vehement denial of Abdul Aziz which convinced the Khan that he was actually on the right track. Backed by his men, he thrust Abdul Aziz aside roughly and approached the open car door.

"We will see whom you have in here, anyhow," he laughed and then stiffened, his face expressive of anything but humour.

For, from the dark interior of the car there reached him sounds of a live and shrill chirruping, as if an aviary of birds had been rudely startled and were making their protests heard. At the same moment, the voice of Abdul Aziz protested as well, in a bellow of anger.

"Let not thine infamous eyes look upon those within!" he raged, seeking to claw at the Khan to drag him back. "Are they not my wives and the women of my harem, whom I am taking for their holiday in the hills? By what right do you seek to molest them and me? For this indeed I appeal to the criminal court. I will have you stripped of your authority, flung into jail——"

The Khan paid no heed to the splutter of his rage, like a steaming torrent in its hot flow. It was true, after a glimpse in the car, that it contained not one, but several occupants, and these appeared to

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be all women, veiled as those belonging to a harem. Intriguing flashes from their dark, alluring eyes, all the same, left him still suspicious.

"Much as I regret interrupting the journey of your wives for their holiday in the hills, Abdul Aziz," he said, "it is necessary that I detain them and you. I am, as I said, seeking Mohammed Haj. I cannot risk that he should escape——"

"But—can you not see that no man is here—only my women?" frothed the big Moslem.

"It has been known for a woman's dress to help a man escape from justice and from danger," remarked the Khan, curtly. "We will, if you please, return to your house, so that these women of yours may be proved such."

Abdul Aziz was vituperative in his anger, but the Khan insisted. He, in fact, took the wheel of the larger car, while the driver of it was brought along by the police, back within the gates of that big place in the heart of the city. Here, although he realised that he was taking considerable risks, which—if not substantiated by the result he hoped—might have serious consequences, he had the veiled women pass before him till the car was empty.

"And now——" almost shrieked Abdul Aziz on a note of malignant triumph, "——what shall be said by the District Magistrate as to this outrage to the women of a law-abiding Moslem?"

"Law abiding, oh Abdul Aziz?" the Khan retorted, not admitting his mistake, but seeking only to justify it. "It remains to be seen. Better not say too much. Strange indeed that, as is known to my police here, you came out of Paridkhot, on the same night as Mohammed Haj escaped thence. It may also yet be proved that you were friendly with Mohammed Haj."

As to that, he knew nothing, nor had any evidence. But a suggestion, made in the form of an accusation, with the sinister inference that proof lay ready in the background, is apt to break down the most obstinate of natives. It seemed, however, to have no effect on Abdul Aziz, and the Khan felt like having drawn a blank here too, when interruption came from an unexpected source; the native who had been driving Abdul Aziz and his women.

"Inspector sahib, I am now telling the truth!" He flung himself towards the Khan with gestures of supplication. "All-seeing indeed is the eye of the law. I seek only not to receive punishment. It was not of my will, but by order of my master, that I drove Mohammed Haj from Paridkhot in this same car, as you say——"

"Swine, and son of a swine——!" the astounded Abdul Aziz bellowed, hurling himself at the man, and seeking to strangle the words in his throat, only to be seized by the Khan's men.

"Of what use to try and deceive the law, oh Abdul Aziz?" The Khan laughed, relieved of his earlier fears, and now seeing daylight ahead. "Better by far tell the truth and the whole truth, before worse happens. Take me to where this Mohammed Haj is in hiding, so that I may arrest him. If he is in your house——"

"I say that he is not here!" protested the other, thrusting forth his bearded face with an expression of malevolence. "Since you seek him, you cursed of Allah and friend of unbelievers, find him for yourself! That a Moslem should desire to sell that holy man to gain reward from those whom Allah scorns is indeed shameful, and shall be punished by eternal damnation

"Nor, indeed, shall reward be given you, oh brother of infidels!" he raged on, now in spiteful triumph. "For Mohammed Haj will never be taken. He is safe, and where you will never find him, never dream to seek for him. The voice of Mohammed Haj, free and beyond reach, shall call down curses upon you——"

Voices were indeed calling down curses at this moment with such violence as to still the words of Abdul Aziz, and to startle the Khan, until he suddenly understood the reason of it. Those first wildly shouted curses had begun to grow into a deafening roar, increasing with volume into an ear-splitting din, quite close at hand.

The Khan realised in a flash what it meant. He remembered the report of his inspector and the advice given by Ramchandra Dass, as to the possibility of civil strife when the Hindu wedding-procession and that of the Moslem funeral, met face to face in the open space near by. The Khan barked out instructions to his men for the guarding of Abdul Aziz and all that his house contained, till he returned.

At once, beyond the iron gates, he and the car he drove came upon that scene of strife, as prophesied. He had purposely brought the car, so as to create a diversion as well as swiftly to reach the heart of the disturbance. The violence of his hooting, as well as of his driving, made way for him, the frightened people fleeing this way and that before his advancing juggernaut.

However, the nearer the centre of strife, the more difficult his progress through the stress of the conflicting people, despite the urgency of his hooting and the impressiveness of his uniform, Here, mourning for death and merry-making for marriage, battled with a violence which cared for nothing but blows rained and arousing shrill cries of vengeance.

The Khan, noting how his inspector and men were effectively dealing with the situation, made for them into the centre of the open space. Here, while the mourners scrapped and screamed all around with garland-decked Hindus, he caught a glimpse of an imposing, purple-draped Moslem bier lying apart on the ground. And near to this, of a sudden, he saw the rotund and ridiculous figure of Ramchandra Dass, apparently engaged in a dance.

That he had seen the Khan and his car was obvious, for he began to call in his bleating voice :

"Arrah, inspectorjee . . . come quickly . . . here is matter of great moment . . ."

The Khan, who by now had reached the phalanx of police, engaged in competently pushing back and gradually dispersing the fighters, left his car, making for the little babu. Not that he had any interest in his call. All this civil strife was nothing to him, part of any ordinary day's work.

It was in his mind, however, that now he could crow over Ramchandra to some extent. With Abdul Aziz in police hands, after the native driver's confession, he guessed it would be easy enough to find where Mohammed Haj really was hidden. That he actually had escaped, he much doubted. Anyhow, despite what Ahari had said, the Moslem College had nothing to do with it.

So much at this moment the Khan sought to impress on Ramchandra, still prancing and gesturing round the Moslem bier, to which, also, some of the police had come.

"Quickly, inspectorjee!" Ramchandra was urging, excitedly. "Now we are discovering secret of almighty vanishing caboodle!"

"It is already discovered, babu!" the Khan remarked, curtly. "I have under arrest the man who brought Mohammed Haj from Paridkhot by car——"

"Abdul Aziz? Naturally, I am aware of that. But Abdul Aziz—he handed Mohammed Haj over to other people. He——"

Ramchandra's statement, surprising to the Khan, came to such an abrupt end that the latter swung round to discover the reason why the little babu had begun to make such deep salaams. A car, its noise drowned by the turmoil around, had driven up and from it Captain Delaunay sahib had approached the babu and himself.

"What was that about Mohammed Haj, babu?" he asked, in his quiet way.

"Honoured sir, oase of almighty vanishing caboodle is now becoming manifest, owing to much smitings between connubial pleasure-seekers and lamenters of corpse," Ramchandra explained, gesturing towards the Moslem bier, which now remained quite apart on the ground, the police having pushed the crowd back for some distance.

"It is nothing, huzoor," the Khan interposed stiffly, explaining in turn: "This is the body of a dead moulvie from the Moslem College, which is being taken to the train to be buried elsewhere——"

"With your honour's kind permission," interrupted Ramchandra, in turn, "something is strange about this. Information has reached me that body of moulvie was buried in grounds of Moslem College during last night. Therefore, if that is so, who is in coffin being taken to train? Must surely be someone desirous to escape police-trap with great subtlety——"

"Meaning, babu?" Delaunay sahib, not a little puzzled, demanded curtly.

Before Ramchandra could answer, nothing needed to be said. While the bottom of the Moslem bier remained on the ground, the top of it, beneath the drapings, began to move in a strange way, which caused the onlooking police to shout out with dismay at this manifestation of the supernatural.

Then, dispersing entirely the supernatural element, the top of the bier and the drapings were lifted violently and flung aside. A man leaped to his feet, making a violent dash for freedom, only to be seized by the nearest police and after a struggle, being dragged before Delaunay sahib, who said merely :

"Very clever, Mohammed Haj. But—not quite clever enough, as things have happened."

"Because, honoured sir," Ramchandra ventured to add, as the much-wanted Moslem firebrand was hustled away to the thana, "organisers of spurious Moslem decease forgot to take into account possibilities arising from encountering rival procession of Hindu connubial rejoicings. Which was why I personally arranged timing of latter so to coincide as to encourage exhibition of fisticuffs, although myself receiving in process considerable clouts upon unfortunate cranium."

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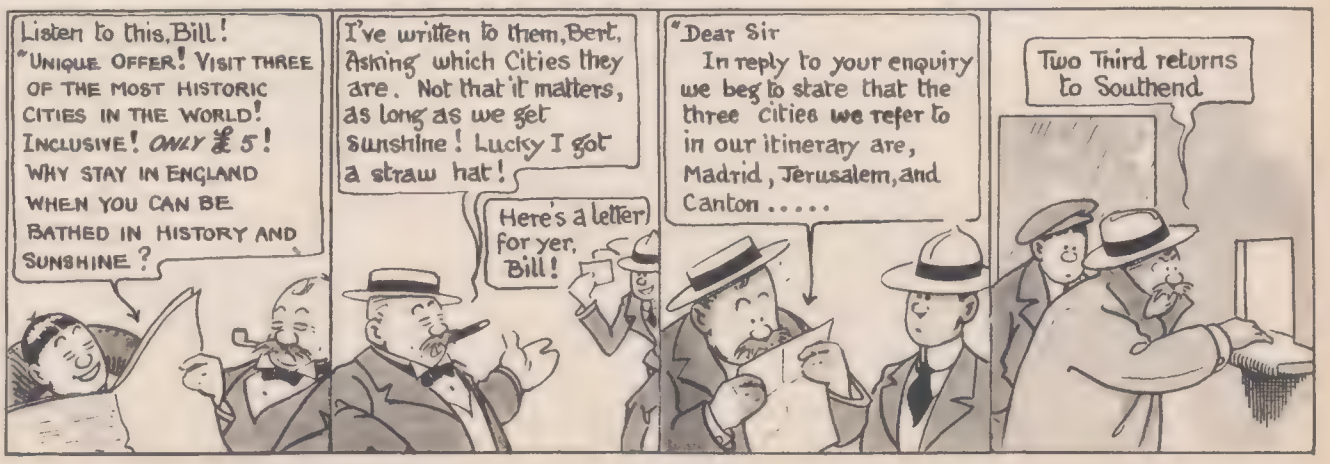

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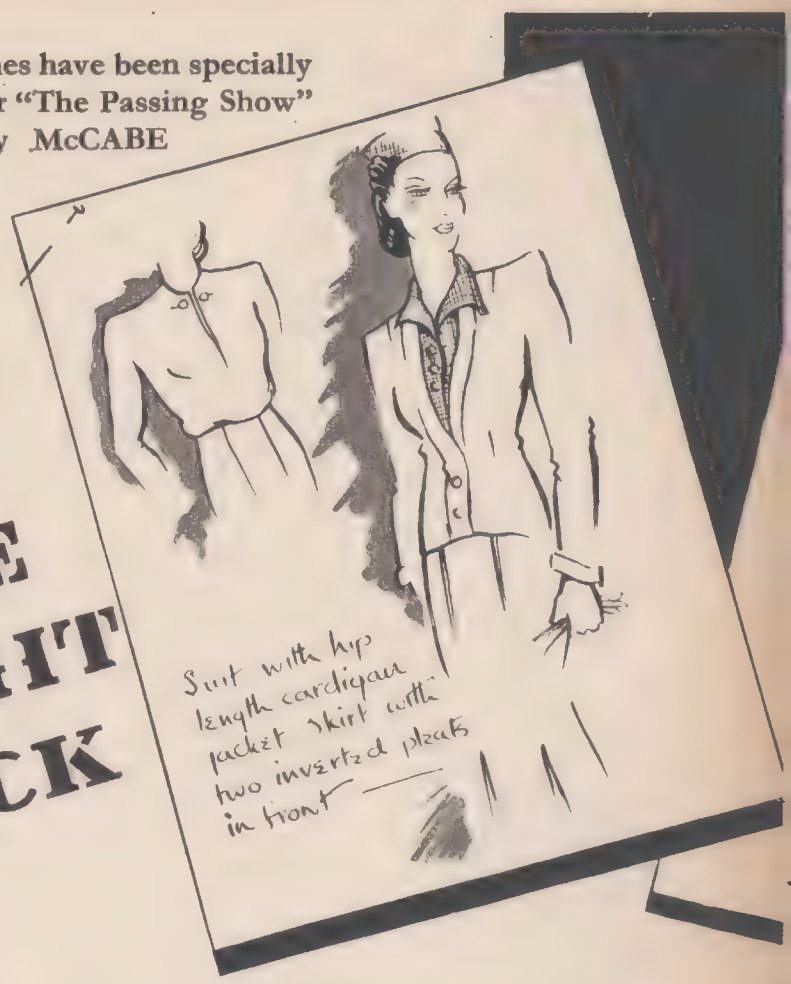

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Shortage of space prevents my publishing diagrams that would be sufficiently large to show exactly how to cut your pattern, but if you write your name and address on a postcard marked "Pattern," I shall have detailed diagrams sent to you. With these and the following instructions you will have no difficulty in cutting out and making up this model dress.

Cut the pattern out in brown paper. It can be made to any measurement required, as shown in Diagrams 1 and 2. Before cutting pattern, write "centre front," "fold," "centre back seam," etc., and then cut on all dotted lines. There you have your pattern complete.

Now you will require 4 yards of material, 36 inches wide. Place the pattern on as shown in Diagram 3 and pin firmly before cutting out. More fullness is allowed on the skirt, as shown by the dotted lines. Allow ¾-in. turnings on all seams; tack-mark all round pattern; also for centre front and back.

Tack all skirt seams together, also centre back of bodice. Tack waist of skirt to waist of bodice, making sure that the centre front of skirt and bodice meet. Gather shoulders into size required. Tack back straps to waist, meeting in centre, or crossed over if desired. Then try on to make sure fitting is correct.

The skirt seams should be edge-stitched on the right side. Stitch seam at centre back of bodice and waist seam. Bind neck and armhole edges. Try on after all the seams have been well pressed and so get the required length. The edge of the belt could be bound to match the armholes, or neatened with a small, hand-sewn hem.

Ornamental clips could be worn to hold the shoulder fullness, or the belt could be trimmed with sequins and the shoulders with rows of gauging.

To make this evening gown you could buy a good heavy rayon satin in any shade for 4s. 11d. a yard. Actually I can picture it looking really lovely in ice blue with diamond clips at the shoulders.

The suit in the other picture has also been designed specially for us. The model was in a dusty pink material, with navy blue blouse, hat, bag and gloves, which is a combination of colours predicted to be very fashionable this coming spring and summer.

These models were designed by a well-known academy of dressmaking where, for very little expenditure, you can learn the art of cutting out from a picture of a model, making and finishing it perfectly. If you are unable to attend the academy you can learn at home in your spare time, for the postal tuition enables students to master the art of dress-cutting, designing, pattern-making, dressmaking, fashion-styling and ladies' tailoring.

Here is a hobby that will save you pounds and pounds in a year.

★ Ursula has naturally wavy and curly hair, yet she never looks really well groomed about the head except when she's been to the hairdresser. As a rule she looks as though she's been dragged backwards through a hedge.

Her hair is a little too curly and therefore looks rather woolly if she's not very careful.

If by any chance she reads this page, she'll realise outright that for ages I've been hinting that she should wear a shingle cap at night.

Unfortunately, she is one of those girls who seem determined that such things are uncomfortable. I've seen dozens of golly-wogs about; I've sat behind them on buses; I've seen them in this office; I've noticed them at dances (when their hair ought to be at its best,) and they all seem to believe that some divine providence is trying to keep their hair just as it was set by the hairdresser. But life isn't like that. So why not wear a net at night?

When I put this question to my tousle-headed friends, they always say, "I can't bear anything under my chin at night." So what!

I know a cap specially designed to avoid this discomfort. It is so cut that you can cover your hair with it, adjust it so that you hardly feel that you have anything on your head at all and hop into bed to sleep the sleep of the just, knowing that you'll be looking good in the morning.

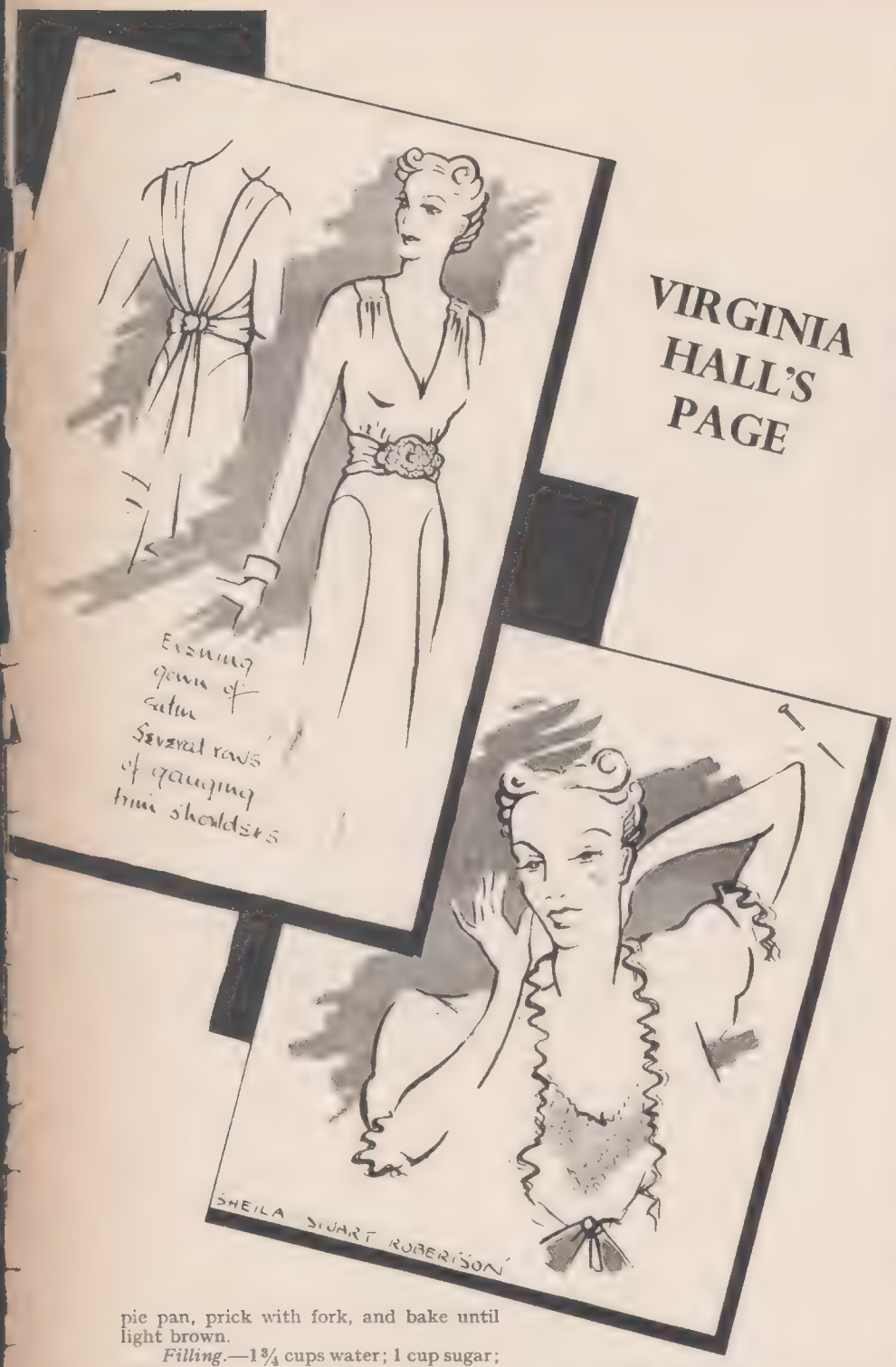
These caps, made in six pastel shades, are in three prices, 1s. 11d., 1s. 6d. and 1s. If you are interested, please write to me and I'll be pleased to give you particulars, or, if you wish, I will have a cap sent to you on receipt of a postal order for the necessary amount.

Now then, all you shock-headed Peters, do something about it! And that goes for you, too, Ursula!

★ Here is a recipe for lemon pie that I tasted at a small dinner party the other evening. It will certainly please those devoted to this delightful sweet.

Crust.—¾ cup flour; 4 tablespoonfuls fat (lard;) ¼ teaspoonful salt; 1 teaspoonful sugar; ¼ teaspoonful baking powder. Enough cold water to moisten. Mix flour, fat, salt, sugar, baking powder. Add water. Then roll and put in

VIRGINIA HALL'S PAGE



pie pan, prick with fork, and bake until light brown.

Filling.—1¾ cups water; 1 cup sugar; ¾ cup corn-starch (dissolved in cold water;) 2 egg yolks; 1 large or 2 small lemons (grate and squeeze;) 1 tablespoonful butter; ⅛ teaspoonful salt.

Boil water with sugar, then take off the stove and add corn-starch. In another bowl put the egg yolks, lemon and salt, then add to other mixture and put in pie shell.

For the meringue, beat two egg whites, with one tablespoonful of cold water, until stiff, and then add four tablespoonfuls of sugar. Spread this on lemon filling. And then eat one little piece, and I'll bet you'll be back again for another bigger bit.

★ A party to which I was invited the other evening started with a treasure hunt. It was not the old game that we all know, for it needed little preparation, yet was quite as good as a "mixer" to start an evening.

First of all we drew for partners and then each pair drew slips of paper on which were written the names of nuts and animals, i.e., "Chestnuts and Cats," "Cobnuts and Cows," "Walnuts and Lions," "Brazils and Dogs," and so on.

Somewhere in the house were hidden twelve nuts of each kind and we had to hunt them. When one of the pair found the particular kind of nut she was looking for she wasn't allowed to touch it, but had to stand by it, making the noise of the animal that had also been written on the paper, until her partner came along to collect the nut.

The first couple to collect twelve nuts received a prize. I was unlucky for I had to collect cobnuts, which were so small that they could be hidden in taps, in fingers of gloves and other impossible places. Next time I'll wangle it so that I hunt coconuts!

★ One of my girl friends who has just returned from a winter sports holiday rather the worse for her holiday after an unfortunate ski-ing accident, has been told to remain in bed for a week or two, before she tries to walk about again.

When I went to see her the other morning I was greatly intrigued by the little jacket she was wearing over her "nightgown." It was in itself quite ordinary, for its shape was just that of an ordinary little bolero. It was made of pale pink satin, and across two corners of the front, at the waist, two triangles of chiffon had been sewn on the outside of the jacket and these had been filled with potpourri, which you could see through the chiffon. It looked most attractive, and the scent was lovely.

My friend said someone had given her two of these little bedjackets. The other was pale mauve with lavender in the corners. A nice idea, don't you think!

★ "Glamour, which is the keyword this winter in fashion generally, can be developed personally and quite simply," says Myrna Loy. She adds that one of the first rules of "glamour-getting" is that a woman must not talk unless she has something interesting to say. And she calls that simple!

If you are interested in any of the things mentioned in this page please write to Virginia Hall, c/o "The Passing Show," 92 Long Acre, W.C.2, for she is very willing to help in such matters

Harlene Hair-Drill

1 HARLENE HAIR GROWER AND TONIC

During Five Royal Reigns the name of "Harlene" had stood paramount and supreme.

Thin, Impoverished and Skimpy Hair becomes thick, virile and richly abundant! Straggly, Brittle, Splitting Hair becomes elegantly neat, obedient to brush and comb, soft and silky! Falling hair is stopped and new Healthy Hair commences to grow upon bald, patches! All Chemists: Price 1/1½ 2/9 and 4/9 per bottle.

2 Cremex Shampoo

Delightfully refreshing and supercleansing. Frees the hair from every trace of Scurf and Dandruff and is most beneficial to the scalp. FREE Burnishing Rinse included 1/6 per box of 7 Shampoos. (Single sachets 3d. each.)

3 Uzon Brilliantine

"Uzon" gives just that final touch of distinction to the coiffure. This highly refined brilliantine is invaluable to those with over-dry scalp. In Liquid or Solidified form, 1/1½ and 2/9 per bottle, or 1/3 per tin.

4 Harlene Wave Setting Lotion

Keeps the hair in wave and makes the waves deep and entrancingly beautiful. Protects against fog, mist, damp, and even sea air! Saves £ £ £'s on Waving Bills! 7½d. and 1/3 per bottle. Special for Blondes, Harlene GOLDEN Wave Set.

5 Harlene Camomile Golden Wash

Doubles and trebles the beauty of fair hair, and gives it that glorious light-gold sunshine touch. Just the thing for hair that has become dull and lost its tone. 1/3, 3/- and 5/- per bottle.

6 Astol Hair Colour Restorer

If your hair is grey, or going grey, you should use "ASTOL" Hair Colour Restorer, which will quickly bring it back to a youthful colour—making you look years younger. 1/9, 3/- and 5/- per bottle.

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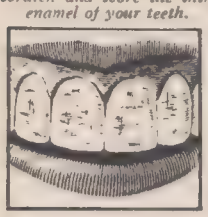

These teeth are safe from damage. Their protective enamel is unscratched.

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Don't take risks with the vital 1/1,000th of an inch of enamel which keeps out decay.

The enamel which protects your teeth from decay at the gum line is *far* thinner than a sheet of paper. Yet some tooth pastes only whiten teeth by using abrasives which wear enamel away!

Make sure your tooth paste is safe. Compare it with one which dentists say is the finest and smoothest of all—Odol. Get a tube of Odol to-day (or send coupon below for free sample). Put both to the Bite Test. Grind a little between your front teeth. If your present paste seems the least bit gritty don't take chances any longer. It is just because it is so safe that dentists recommend Odol.

Odol can be obtained as Tooth Paste or Solid Dentifrice. There is also Odol Mouthwash and Odol Denture Powder.

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Coral, Exotic, Natural, Pastel, Hawaiian.
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BOMBED BY FRANCO

Continued from page 11

said: "I am sure you will agree with me, Sir Peter, that a Rolls-Royce car is no longer a luxury; it is a necessity."

Another afternoon, after we had gone through two very alarming air-raids, she looked up from her sewing and said: "I am certain, dear Sir Peter, that God has sent you to save us!"

The talk must have dropped, as I did not know the right reply to that comment. But after sewing reflectively for a few minutes longer, she looked up again and said: "When this is all over, Sir Peter, you must really come to lunch with us some day in Madrid."

One of the three daughters caught my eye, and we nearly disgraced ourselves by laughing.

All that was many weeks later. Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning were quiet, but early in the afternoon another search-party arrived at the Bolins' house. Don Tomas, now more confident, and I went across and found them a motley group, two in uniform with rifles, others with all sorts of weapons from a riding whip to a revolver.

After the search, which was rather casual, we parted good friends, and by six in the afternoon things seemed so quiet that all my guests returned home.

But things were not quiet. All Wednesday night, messages were coming in from the rest of Spain, telling of serious fighting, not yet over, in many cities in which the rebellion was being held up, and that other towns and even provinces, had fallen into the hands of Franco. Still worse, fugitives from La Linea, Seville and Granada slowly poured into Málaga, telling of the bloody work the rebels were doing, even in towns and villages where they had met with no opposition.

My troubles began early on Thursday morning. About six o'clock Maria came to my door saying that some armed men had come to search my house, but would wait until I got up. I found a group of five or six young men armed, with rifles and revolvers, but in no sense aggressive. I told Maria to take them upstairs, after which they came to my study and then through to my bedroom, looking round in the most superficial way.

They had been at their work all night and looked very tired. I gave them coffee, biscuits, and cigarettes, and told them that they had no business to search an English house, showing them a minute Union Jack at the gate. They agreed at once, and then got busy putting the flag for me in a more conspicuous place. Then we parted cordially.

I finished dressing and settled down to work in my study, when a clamour and shouting from the Bolins' house sent me rushing across. In the inner courtyard, in front of the great entrance door, two or three cars were standing, surrounded by a shouting crowd of men and women, some armed, all excited and angry.

They told me that a machine-gun had been found in the house. I said: "Nonsense," and tried to push my way to the inner hall.

The uniformed assault officer in charge seemed anxious lest the crowd should get out of hand. He made a gesture to a man beside him to search me, and I smilingly raised my hands, while he passed his hands over my jacket, and then I was allowed to go into the hall, where I found Tomas and his wife just coming down the staircase, collected but very anxious.

Of course, there was no machine-gun, but a large Royalist flag and a sporting rifle, registered, but foolishly hidden in a linen drawer, had been found.

Before long, much to the relief of the officer, the situation was cleared up.

A very intelligent woman, a bitter Communist, who had been employed two days a week in the Bolins' house to do ironing, had laid information, either inventing or believing the machine-gun story.

Two or three of the men who had searched my house in the morning recognised me and came out of the crowd to help me. There was no machine-gun, but the Royalist flag and the sporting gun were bad, and Don Tomas must be taken to the Civil Governor for examination.

Doña Mercedes insisted on going with her husband to the Civil Governor's office. She told me afterwards that it was a terrifying experience, for the entrance to the office was surrounded by an excited, jeering, and threatening crowd, watching prisoners whom they believed to be Fascists brought in. Meantime, with the friendly help of the guards left behind, the old lady, the nursery governess, and the two maids collected packages of clothes and food, and we went back to my house in a melancholy procession.

Fortunately, the two little girls settled down at once, had a meal in charge of their nurse, and began their usual afternoon siesta. But my other guests were afraid to be left in the unsettled conditions.

So we sat in the garden, I doing my best to comfort them. By half-past one no news of any kind had come, and we sat down to lunch. We had hardly begun when a friendly neighbour from the Camino Nuevo came to call me to her telephone (I had been unable to get mine installed.)

Doña Mercedes was in the British Consulate, having been taken there by Mr. Scott, the English manager of the iron-oxide works. I should like to record that until he left Málaga, on January 23, with the British Consul and the few remaining English, Scott was untiring in giving quiet and competent help to the English and Anglo-Spaniards, although lack of transport and shortage of money for wages made his own work extremely difficult.

I found Doña Mercedes sitting in the British club over the Consulate, outwardly calm, but naturally very distressed. Her husband had gone through a long examination and, although no definite charge had been made against him, he was sent to gaol. I told her that the others were safe in my house, and we set off home.

As far as we were concerned, things were quiet all Saturday and on Sunday, but on Monday morning we were visited by the first enemy aeroplane, which circled over the town and dropped bombs close to the market, killing some civilians. We heard next day that an equivalent number of prisoners, selected from those deemed most implicated in the rebellion, had been taken to the cemetery and shot. We knew nothing about that and as my guests were very anxious, I went towards the prison in the afternoon, with linen, chocolates, sausage and a note.

At a corner about a hundred yards from the prison, I was stopped by an armed patrol, completely unfriendly. I explained that the parcel I was carrying was for a friend in prison, and that the Civil Governor permitted food and clothing to be taken.

The explanation seemed only to make them angrier.

"Well," I said, "keep the parcel," handing it to them, "until I go to the prison and ask if it is not allowed." But when I made as if to go, I was covered by two revolvers and a rifle.

"A single step and we shoot!"

It was a remark to which there was no answer, and under their watchful, suspicious eyes I took out a cigarette and began to smoke, without, however, offering them the usual civility of joining me.

Presently they stopped a covered lorry on its way towards the town. I accepted an "invitation" to go into the front seat between the revolver-armed driver and a man with a rifle; two of the patrol got in behind and off we drove.

But, to my strong distaste, instead of going towards the town, they turned up a side road marked "To the Cemetery." Just before the gates, however, the lorry turned into a side road, stopped at some houses, but only to deliver food, as it seemed to me. Then we rattled into the town, and although the noise was too great to try to talk I was recovering confidence.

Over the bridge, past the station, we turned up a side street and then into a great dark shed, thronged with armed men and women and children. The car stopped and, with one of my escort in front and one behind, we twisted and pushed our way to a kind of rabbit-warren which looked like a deserted board-school and was, I afterwards learned the Casa de Pueblo, the centre of the working-men, socialists and trade-unionists.

We came to a small ante-room where I was left, while my escort went in search of the emergency committee.

Two or three rather better-educated men were waiting, and I talked to them, telling them of my troubles. They were delighted to know that I was English, told me that I should have no trouble if I were to wear an English badge on my coat.

They taught me the various salutes so that all would be well with persons who did not recognise the British badge, and assured me that as England was a democratic country and would be in sympathy with a democracy fighting for its life, I should be welcome among all of them.

It is a relief to me that I was moved to prophecy, and told them that although I personally was entirely with them, they must not deceive themselves. The present Conservative Party would not stir a finger to help the Spanish Government, the Labour leaders would concur, probably with some vague expressions of regret, the newspaper magnates would be openly on the side of the rebels, and would flood their papers with the old stories of priests crucified, nuns raped, children blinded, carried over from the days of Oviedo.

They could expect only a barren sympathy from some of the intellectuals, but some money and such practical help as they could give from the poorest of the poor. But I admit that my pessimism did not reach any conception so degrading to the international reputation and historic fame of England as the Non-Intervention Committee. My new friends refused to believe me.

One of them, seeing that I was getting impatient, took me along to another room where a committee was in session. My escort were standing waiting, but after a few words to the chairman, who smiled and gave some answer, they signalled to me to go out again. I was marched back through the town, an armed man on each side of me, two others in front and two behind, amidst stares and averted glances from one or two tradesmen I knew, apparently too afraid even to show pity, or alarmed lest they should have been compromising themselves by friendliness to a traitor, until we reached the Gobierno Civil, through whose crowded corridors we passed as a knife goes through cheese.

In a few minutes we were in the street again. My status had been verified, and a message had been 'phoned through to the prison. My escort was now all smiles, but asked me rather shyly if I would pay for a cab, as the prison was a long way off, and they had no car.

We tumbled somehow into a four-wheeler. One of them gave the order to the driver, "To the gaol," and I sealed our friendship hilariously by leaning out to give the additional order, "There and back, a return trip."

And so we reached the prison, roaring with laughter, after stopping for a moment at the post where I had been arrested, only to receive a friendly salute.

In a few minutes the parcel was sent in and a note brought out, and we all six drove back towards the town, stopping at a crowded little bar near the station where I pledged my new friends and a whole crowd in Palma wine. I left them at the tram with many friendly handshakes.

And so ended my first arrest in Spain, an arrest by illiterate and undisciplined members of the extreme Left, who knew of me only that I had been taken in the act of trying to succour one of their enemies, on the day when his rebel friends had been raining down from the skies a bloody death on their women and children.

It is true that I bought a small Union Jack, and as often as I remembered wore it on my jacket when I was on the streets of Málaga, but from that day on I got more friendly greetings than sour looks, and felt quite safe personally, until the rebels entered.

NEXT WEEK

How The Bolins Escaped

Apparently a temperance worker can find a lot of inspiration in home-made wine

NEVER SO CORDIAL

BY S. L. BENSUSAN

ILLUSTRATED BY RONALD LAMPITT

THE Society for the Rigorous Repression of Alcohol maintains a permanent staff, working them hard and paying them modestly. The S.R.R.A. has a vast income but office expenses are nearly as high as Mount Everest and there are so many directors, managers, appeal organisers and the rest that there is little left for those who do the work.

Happily, their natural distaste for alcohol being associated with consciousness of a glorious mission, they are enthusiasts and perhaps the most enthusiastic of all is Miss Carinthia Cripps, that simple, unworldly lady. No effort is beyond her will or her competence and to make matters better she is blessed with private means. Her other outstanding possessions are a squat figure, a loud voice, intense convictions and a profound contempt for man and his works. She holds that the over-rated creature is responsible for all the evil in the world, since brewers and distillers are male to a man.

If there be a stronghold to be stormed, a forlorn hope to be led, the committee sends for Miss Cripps and she, adjusting her monocle, squares her shoulders, stands to attention and says, "I'll go." Then Lady Watersmeet, chairman, expresses the sense of the assembly and moves a vote of thanks to "our indefatigable friend and colleague." It is carried with the acclamation that serves Miss Cripps in lieu of all other reward.

The S.R.R.A. has a map of the counties, showing the more alcoholic districts of each. This accounts for Miss Cripps' visit to Maychester, where she was billed to talk at the Women's Institute. The Intelligence department of the S.R.R.A. has shaded the district and the shading is of the kind that implies the drinking of alcohol to the full limit of the means of the drinkers.

Miss Cripps had chosen a good day. Very early summer was on the countryside and as she drove her smart two-seater through marshland, she decided that she would accost the first respectable woman she could see in that quiet country of charming, thatched cottages, with gardens that spoke so eloquently of love and skilled attention. Mrs. Tuppet, who offers "Teas" was in her garden. Miss Cripps hailed her, Mrs. Tuppet laid her fork aside and came to the gate.

"I'd like some tea," she began, "if it isn't too early in the afternoon. I've had no more than a very light lunch, so if you could serve me——"

"You're kindly welcome," replied Mrs. Tuppet, "an' that'll be a shillin', but you kin have as much as you kin goffle f'r the money."

"I wonder," inquired Miss Cripps a little later, when she had reduced Mrs. Tuppet's profit to very modest dimensions, "if you could put me up for the night. I feel I should be very comfortable here and I'm not a person who gives much trouble. Your shed at the end of the garden would take my car."

"I got a little owd room," admitted Mrs. Tuppet, "next me own. You kin see it. If you have a bit o' supper, time you done chatterin', a nice cup o' cocoa an' a mite o' toasted cheese, an' a couple o' new laid eggs f'r y'r breakfus an' y'r tea now, I can't charge ye less than fower shillin's. Did, I'd be losin' money on ye an' Martha Tuppet don't want she should do that, her time o' life, t'ain't likely."

"I'll be perfectly satisfied," said Miss Cripps.

She said no more. Mrs. Tuppet cleared away the tea things. Then Miss Cripps, tired after nearly three hours' run from town into the vital airs of marshland following a strenuous week at headquarters and an annual meeting, fell fast asleep in the comfortable chair. The afternoon with its rich gift of sunshine passed her by; relaxation was complete; she slept dreamlessly.

When she woke it was five o'clock; she had slept nearly two hours. The fickle day had changed its mood, a chilly east wind was blowing through the garden. Summer comes slowly up this way and there are a few winds that never fail to outstay their welcome. Strangers are often affected by them.

Miss Cripps rose, yawned, took her bearings and entered the cottage; she felt cold. In the kitchen-living-room is a large ingle-nook fireplace. Mrs. Tuppet was sitting on the side nearer the glowing log; above it the kettle hung down on a chain fastened to a crane. "Come you in an' set ye down," said Mrs. Tuppet, kindly, "th' wind's got up this las' half hour. That's enough to flee ye. There, you don't wanter keep all on sneezin'. You ain't happened of a chill have ye? That on't be much use to you if so be you wanter go up street an' chatter to folk."

"I hope I'm all right," replied Miss Cripps, uneasily.

"You don't wanter ketch a cowd," continued the landlady with authority. "Doos, it'll fly to y'r throat that's likely an' you on't be able to chatter. But there, I kin cure it f'r ye."

"I'll be grateful. I think it is most kind of you," said Miss Cripps, as her hostess went to the press and produced a small bottle bound tastefully in wicker work and drew the cork with her teeth.

"What's in it?" Miss Cripps added, with a natural feeling of suspicion. She could not think it was medicine.

"That's elderberries what I pecked bottom o' me own garden an' a mite o' sugar with them," Mrs. Tuppet explained, as she half filled a breakfast cup with the elderberry cordial and added a modicum of boiling water.

Miss Cripps smelt the mixture. It had all the innocent fragrance of a country garden. She knew she was safe; there was an Arcadian simplicity about cottage, garden and beneficent flower essence that would avert all threatened ills. She sipped; the drink had the flavour of ripe fruit; she surrendered herself to the innocent pleasure of self cure and emptied the breakfast cup.

"You're lucky I got that bottle open," remarked Mrs. Tuppet. "That's ten year owd; there ain't a many round about these parts got a drop to match it though I sez it what made it."

Miss Cripps found no consolation in this recital. "I feel so strange; I don't think I can be right, I've never felt like this before. The elders must have gone to my head," she gasped.

"You dedn't wanter let them goo there," cried Mrs. Tuppet, sternly. "They oughter bin gone to y'r stummick by the good rights. That's what I give 'em to ye for."

"The room's going round," cried Miss Cripps, distressfully.

"I know that ain't," replied Mrs. Tuppet, a little angrily; "I never knowed it do no sech thing; me room ain't never behaved so all me born days an' it ain't goin' to begin now, I lay."

"But what shall I do?" cried Miss Cripps. "I have to talk at the Institute at half-past seven. The meeting has been advertised for a fortnight past."

"You better goo upstairs," suggested Mrs. Tuppet, "an' sleep y'r cold off like. That's the on'y thing to do when you got a cold what's took ye sudden same as this one. There's a many feels quite theirselves agen arter they bin and dropped their eyelids."

Miss Cripps followed this advice with no approach to difficulty and the cuckoo clock commented on the situation with unfailing regularity, while two miles away supporters and opponents of Rigorous Repression assembled to bless or ban. The first arrivals were in their places well before 7.30, the meeting being timed for that hour, exodus started at 8.30. Comment was varied, brief, anxious, bitter, irrelevant, or sarcastic, according to the attitude of the commentator to the high principles Miss Cripps proposed to support. Some had come prepared to speak a word, or if need be strike a blow in defence of liberty and beer. Others were waiting to proclaim views that may have been founded on strong moral principle or weak digestive systems. But there was nothing to be said save to express a pious wish that the lecturer was not a victim to accident on the road.

In the far away marshland cottage, some time after that, Mrs. Tuppet shook a sleeping figure.

"I got y'r cocoa an' a mite o' toasted cheese," she said to Miss Cripps, as that lady endeavoured, vainly and unhappily, to locate herself, to find out where she was and why, and to account for a heavy head. "That bin an' gone nine o'clock. I come up afore to have a look at ye but you was snorin' cruel, so I let ye bide. I expect that'll be because you wanter mite o' supper. Come downstairs and have it along o' me. Wittles don't stay by ye hereabouts; that's the strong air, or leastaways so folk tell ye. Happen I kin spare ye another drop o' me elder. I lay that's most took y'r cold off o' ye; you don't look white no more."

No longer mistress of her fate or captain of her soul, Miss Cripps followed her to the little kitchen-living-room. The fragrance of toasted cheese was delicious, the fire inviting; a gust of rain smote the window panes. The meeting would be dissolved by now—and to-morrow. Well, to-morrow she would meet to-morrow's problems.

Miss Cripps replied incoherently.

"If I give ye another sup o' this here" continued Satan, who had now assumed the outward appearance of Mrs. Tuppet, "an' you git to bed d'reckly minute arter it, you'll get up in th' mornin' right as rine. An' as you've had some a'ready I shan't ast ye mor'n a extra sixpence altogether."

"You'll give me your word there's nothing in it but fruit juice and sugar," pleaded Miss Cripps, "no alcohol."

"I made it meself," replied Mrs. Tuppet, with assurance.

"Thank you very much; then it can't have been the cordial that upset me," said Miss Carinthia Cripps, star turn of the S.R.R.A., holding out her cup.

Do YOU get Indigestion?

"I suffered so much with indigestion," writes Mrs. Singleton, of Bow, "that I dreaded mealtimes coming round. I was *afraid* to eat. Since taking 'Bisurated' Magnesia I can eat anything. My husband also suffered for years with Gastric Ulcers, but since taking 'Bisurated' Magnesia he has been free from pain."

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Prices: Powder, 1/3 & 2/6. *Tablets*, 6d., 1/3 & 2/6.

You want 'Bisurated' Magnesia

A FAMOUS ACTRESS GIVES AWAY A SECRET

It was at a very smart Society function that a celebrated actress, discussing the technique of her Art, asked why French women were so much more animated in conversation than English women.

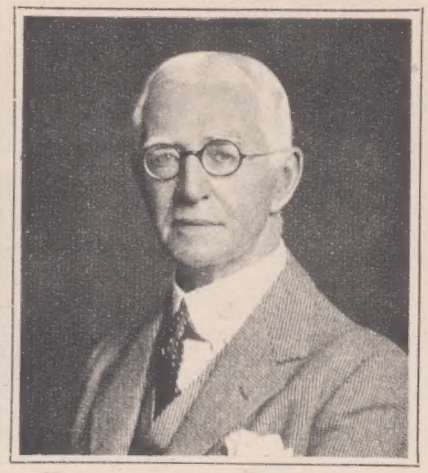
She said: "Watch a French women when she is talking, every phrase is accentuated by graceful gestures of the hands; it is a perfectly natural gift, there is no studied effect, no trace of artificiality or pose about it; every 'geste' adds a subtle charm and meaning to her words." The secret was out, her listeners realised that a great deal of the personal magnetism on the stage of this famous actress was due to the appeal of her own beautiful expressive hands, and one saw at a glance that she was proud of them.

The County woman who plants her own tulips and daffodils no longer allows her hands to advertise her hobby. One's glance is attracted by the little typist's white hands fluttering over the keys; even the hands of the parlourmaid betray that she is copying her mistress.

It really entails so little trouble, just a little Dubarry's Crème Shalimar massaged into the hands every night at bedtime. Even the very first application effects a marvellous improvement.

Dubarry Crème Shalimar is sold in tubes at sixpence and one shilling and three pence by Chemists and Stores.

NEXT WEEK



THIS week, next week, sometime, never," might be our motto when we come to write this column, for we're never too sure which week next week might be. For instance this week we think we ought to describe a famous man who enters our pages for the first time this week.

And we feel we can get away with it because the second instalment of his story will appear next week.

Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell, 73-year-old biologist and former chief of London's Zoo, retired in 1935 to a villa in Málaga to write the vivid story of a lifetime's adventures. He lived in the deep, warm peace of Spain, writing, resting, bathing in the lace-edge fringe of the ocean and talking to the peasants so that the tall, genial sun-burned Scot with the faint suggestion of a smile always playing at the corners of his mouth, soon came to be known affectionately as "Don Pedro."

Came rebellion; and war. Sir Peter refused to be moved, deciding, in spite of the bombs, that he would stick to his home as long as possible. He gave sanctuary to the five daughters, wife and mother of a Spanish aristocrat who was imprisoned; yet he remained on friendly terms with the Government troops who held the town.

Málaga fell. And the conquering troops decided that Sir Peter should be shot.

Eventually he was rescued by a party of British sailors led by a consular official.

For days the newspapers gave sensational headlines to the reports of Sir Peter's arrest and his dangerous position. Once more the headlines flared when it was found that, although Sir Peter was liberated he had been pledged to silence about what had happened in Málaga.

If he broke his pledge Government supporters, held by Franco, should die, he had been told. But now he has opened his lips. In this issue (page 9) he begins the story of his anxious days in Málaga.

It was said that this tall Scot, who has so many of the qualities of greatness, had the biggest story of the war to tell. Well, here it is. Next week you'll see how he managed to get his refugees out of the country.

YOU'RE TELLING US!

YOU'RE TELLING US! Half a guinea is paid for each letter or quotation printed on this page. Address: "Readers' Letters," "Passing Show," 93 Long Acre, London, W.C.2. Please state whether Mr., Mrs. or Miss

WE are so frequently reminded of our shortcomings and of our editorial absent-mindedness, that it was something of a shock to learn from Miss Khoo Pek Tiew, of Penang, S.S., Malaya, that in a moment of higher inspiration we had managed to describe the details of her national dress correctly.

"You would," said Aunt Agatha in the voice that she uses to comment on the fact that the cat is to have kittens again. In fact, she was so suspicious of the source of our knowledge in these things that she did quite a lot to take away the warmth of our sudden enthusiasm for getting things right.

So don't blame us in future if we get the diphthongs in the wrong place when we go all out for the latest Paris fashions. We have been discouraged in a big way.

Meanwhile we think it was very good of Miss Khoo Pek to give us the low-down on what the local girls are wearing. You never know where we will be taking the waters next week, and we'd just hate to describe a *kebaya* as a "thingummy."

"You once described me in a long silken body-fitting jacket with the gown split at both sides from the thigh down," says Miss K. P. T. "That is our national dress, the *ching sum*, and is worn usually when we go to dances and parties.

"Next in popularity comes the Shanghai dress which is composed of a jacket and trousers of multi-coloured gaily flowered fabrics. This is our usual daily home wear. A few of us wear frocks and blouses just as your lovely English maidens do. (*"As though there were any such 'critturs!'"* Editor's italics.)

"The Malays have a hand in our attire, too, for the older generation and our old-fashioned sisters have the long *baju* dress with the *sungul*—Malay style of hair-dressing when gold-diamond hairpins and brilliant ear-rings are used—and the *batik sarongs*. There is the *kebaya*, a half and half, i.e., short *baju* and sarongs. But in this instance the girl's hair is bobbed, 'permed,' or set European style.

"Our country cousins still prefer the

ancient women's dress such as the one you saw Luise Rainer wearing in *The Good Earth*, and some of them are still proud of their pink, lily feet.

"We have, in fact, such a diversity of dress that if you should come to Malaya and find us changing from *kebaya* in the morning to *ching-sum* in the evening, and European dress at night, I hope you would not be surprised. Maybe you would think you were seeing three other people. . . !"

Maybe we would. But in all probability we would be so surprised at finding ourselves in Malaya anyway that even if we did see three other people disguised as Bernard Shaw on his way to the butcher's, we wouldn't be able to raise even an eyebrow.

Meanwhile we are sending this information on to our old pal Savaran; in code, of course, because from what we have heard of his adventures in the past he may need to know the difference between a *ching-sum* and a *kebaya* any minute now.

We are reminded of Savaran by Mr. A. S. Wilson, Purley, Surrey, commenting on his favourite features of THE PASSING SHOW after reading the book from the issue one.

He likes Wilkinson's cover, the short short story and Barrett's man; and he loathes the sight of a serial of any kind.

"They just make me dizzy," he says. "On the other hand, stories in the form of a series are a sheer delight. It is a pleasure to meet the same central characters again and again in stories that are complete in themselves, and I most warmly congratulate you on a long, triumphant list of such stories, including old friends like 'Savaran' and Longshanks and his Father Francis."

Even when we have blundered, we still go on getting letters like this. They all ask about friend Savaran and suggest it's about time he stopped skulking in the back o' beyond with some fair maid and came into the open to bandy words with any prize palookas who are intent on taking liberties with the scheme of things.

We asked Douglas Newton "wot abart it," and he said there would be a Savaran story all tied up for us in the spring. So get ready to give the returning Savaran a big hello in the next few weeks. We don't even mind bombs as long as there is no excess postage to pay.

Incidentally, we thought there was something that smacked of Savaran about the story sent to us by John Gibbs, of Feltham, Middlesex, who asked us to picture a group of big-game hunters playing poker beside their camp fire in the depths of the jungle.

One of the men, obviously pleased with the way things were going, looked up with a grin from his fistful of cards. But the grin soon drained from his features and he put his hand on the table to steady himself. Eventually his terror made itself felt, and the player next to him looked up in a puzzled sort of way, only to say, "Now, just what does a tiger know about cards?" Tough, see!

For Your Amusement

CLUES ACROSS

1. Ardent or hopeful.
7. These make heavy weather.
12. Falling water.
13. This produces torpor.
16. Marred.
18. To draw out.
19. Scottish isle with exclamation for Mohammedan.
20. Perhaps blind fury.
21. Beast of burden.
22. With music of course.
24. A transaction or share out.
26. French article.
27. Not main thoroughfare.
28. Corrupt.
31. Doctrinal belief.
33. Drink divine.
37. Pat too is so edible.
38. Tapir is so clear of the ground.
40. Animal obvious in 30 down.
41. A rustic person.
42. More forbidding.
43. Planters perhaps or maybe dogs.

CLUES DOWN

2. Excite to action.
3. These may fasten something.
4. Fluid measure.
5. So lies a crowned head it is said.
6. No work without this.
7. Sailor's portion or potion.
8. Cane for a spot.
9. Just a lump of wood.
10. Here a drink has gone all Greek.
11. Place in certain position.
14. Sorrowful exclamation.
15. Head and tail of 34 for denominational abbreviation.
16. This has no great dimensions.
17. How is in this boat.
23. Forty winks possibly.
24. Food rules.
25. Elevate.
27. This may be assault.
29. At female relative for nautical term.
30. May carry passengers.
32. Liquid drops.
34. A covering.
35. Irish isle.
36. Achieve higher altitude.
39. State of equality.

P	U	R	P	O	R	T	I	N	G	■	E	L	F	■
■	S	A	I	D	■	N	■	R	E	A	L	■	A	■
S	E	N	T	I	E	N	T	■	E	M	B	L	E	M
■	S	C	H	O	L	A	R	■	T	I	R	A	D	E
G	H	■	U	L	T	I	M	A	T	E	■	I	L	■
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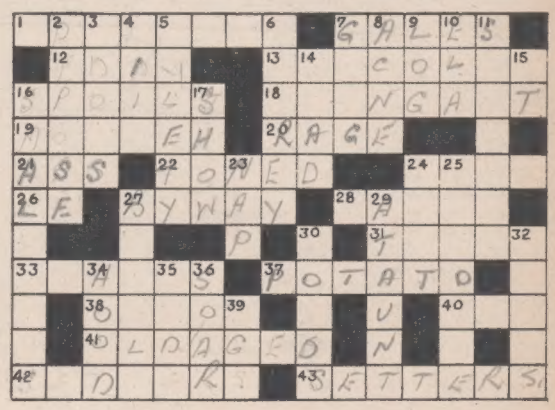
Solution to last week's puzzle.



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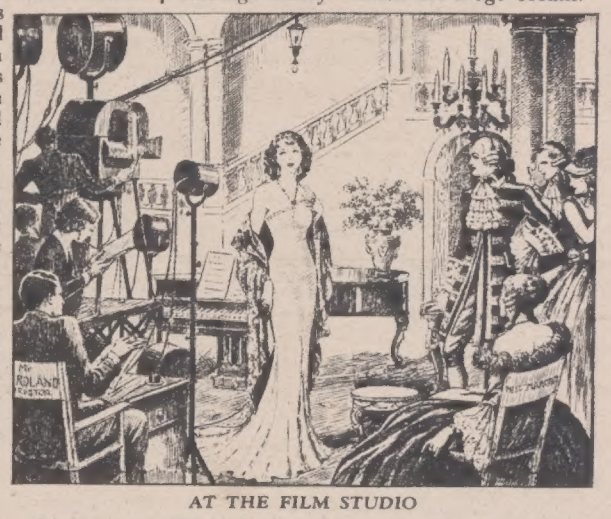

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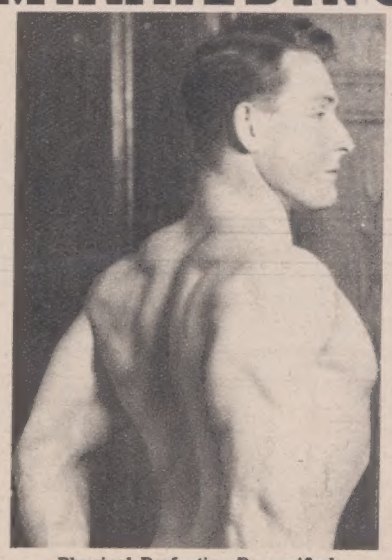

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